Preparation for the European Council meeting of 4 February 2011

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Preparations for the 4 February European energy summit have been made by MEPs. Together with EU Council representatives and the European Commission, they debated the strategic issues of energy policy for the future and the way forward for the European Union.

The Hungarian Presidency of the EU Council advocated a more integrated energy market. It focused in particular on research and development whilst stressing the importance of renewable energy.

The European Commission stressed the importance of enforcing existing legislation with a view to enhancing the internal energy market by 2014.

The Parliament's political groups positions may be summarised as follows:

- **European People's Party (EPP)**: another spectacle of disagreement between the European countries should be avoided. Measures taken as regards the European energy market should be enacted in order to boost growth and job creation.

- **Social and Democrats (S&D)**: the upcoming summit shall be the last chance for Member States to reach their energy goals and for them to discuss the issue of energy poverty in the EU.

- **Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE)**: the crisis situation should be used as an advantage to move forward. The EU's ambition is disappointing compared to the United States which is heavily investing in renewable energy.

- **Greens**: the EU should not commit itself by deepening its relations with certain regimes (Iraq, Georgia) strictly for energy purposes only.

- **Conservatives and Reformers (ECR)**: the EU should be more engaged in the area of energy security. The idea of a common energy market should be supported.

- **European United Left/Nordic Greens (GUE/NGL)**: energy is a crucial sector for creating new jobs. New energy sources should be exploited.

- **Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD)**: bearing in mind rising oil prices, Member States should evaluate EU resources and their potential exploitation.