

Minister Henk Kamp, Minister of Economic Affairs of the Netherlands

Minister Marie-Christine Marghem, Federal Minister of Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development of Belgium

Minister Etienne Schneider, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of the Economy and Foreign Trade of Luxembourg

Subject:

Benelux Business Roundtable conclusions on Energy Climate **and** recommendation on grid expansion between the Netherlands and Belgium and neighbour countries

Brussels, 19 June 2017

Excellencies,

The Benelux Business Roundtable (BBR), constituted on 1 July 2015, comprises business leaders of some of the largest companies (in terms of employment, contribution to GDP and investment) in the Benelux, as well as knowledge partners. Its members are united in their belief that acceleration of cross-border collaboration is crucial to assure growth and prosperity in one of the most dynamic regions of Europe.

Energy/climate is an example where the Benelux Union should accelerate collaboration to achieve a sustainable and competitive Energy Market for producers and consumers and be a driving force for further integration at the EU-level.

Conclusions on Energy/climate

In its plenary session of May 31st 2017 in The Hague, the BBR has adopted conclusions of the working group on Energy/Climate on;

1. Cross border Grid expansion,
2. Innovation,
3. Co2 emissions and COP21
4. Funding of infrastructure investments.

It is our pleasure and honour to send you herewith the full text of our conclusions.

Cross border Grid expansion and Pentalateral Energy forum

In October 2016, the BBR expressed its support for the intention of upgrading the electricity transmission between Belgium and the Netherlands via the Belgian and Dutch grid operators Elia and TenneT. This increased cross-border interconnection is also in line with the bilateral collaboration agreement signed in April 2016 by the Belgian and Dutch energy ministers with the ambition to further integration of the Northwest-European energy markets.

The BBR calls on the Energy Ministers of the three countries to:

1. Assure that this process is accelerated and to provide a time frame for implementation;
2. Defend and promote further integration of the Northwest-European energy markets at the Pentalateral Energy Forum

We strongly suggest that the grid expansion issue will be put on the agenda of the Pentalateral Energy Forum, which convenes this Monday June 26th.

We have taken the liberty to send copy of this letter and attachment to Mr Maarten Camps, secretary general of the Dutch ministry of Economic affairs, who was present at the plenary session dinner, as well as Mr Thomas Antoine, secretary general of the Benelux Unie, who was also present and suggested to present this recommendation to the upcoming PEF meeting.

With our highest regard,

The board of directors of the Benelux Business Roundtable (BBR)

Eric ter Hark, Chairman
Wouter de Geest
Michel Wurth

For further information on the BBR please consult www.beneluxbusinessroundtable.org