

The 6th Refining Forum recognises the economic and social value of the European refining sector and calls for a continued review of the Fitness Check and its use in the dialogue on the impact of legislation.

Brussels, 2 March 2016: The 6th meeting of the Commission EU Refining Forum took place yesterday in Brussels, with participation of Member States, Commission, European Parliament, Industry, experts and other stakeholders. Whereas all stakeholders agreed on the economic and social value of EU refining, the industry however warned against the increasing costs resulting from the EU ETS Phase IV and the Industrial Emissions Directive compared to their international competitors and underlined the growing risk of outsourcing EU emissions associated with the growing levels of imports or refined products.

The 6th Refining Forum gathered some 140 participants from Member States, Commission services, European Parliament, Industry and other stakeholders.

In his opening keynote speech Commissioner Arias Cañete underlined the crucial role of the European refining Industry for EU's security of Supply and underlined the leading position worldwide of the refining sector for energy efficiency and innovation.

John Cooper, Director General FuelsEurope, welcomed that Commissioner's Arias Cañete recognised the role of the Refining Forum as the platform for discussion between legislators and the industry about the impact of legislation. He commented *"It is very important that in the current difficult economic and competitive context we maintain this continued dialogue with the institutions on the impact of legislation on our sector"*.

John Cooper also welcomed the pragmatic position of Member of Parliament, Elisabetta Gardini, who stated that *"the refining industry provides value to the European economy, to the industrial fabric, to the citizen and contributes also to the global environment"*. On the outcome of COP21 Mrs. Gardini strongly recommended

that "until the rest of the world will have comparable binding commitments to those of the EU, it is in the interest of the planet to keep industrial activity in Europe rather than offshoring it to less environmentally rigorous regions".

Peter Mather, Vice President Europe at BP, called for the development of *"a realistic long term view and strategy for the petroleum refining and fuels industry in Europe, with the EU institutions, recognised by a wide range of stakeholders, such that companies and investors can plan their business investments with the confidence that they will have a long life and be of value for the long term"*.

Moreover, John Cooper noted the support from Member States, and underlined in particular *"their call for a continued update of the Fitness Check and its use as a tool to assess the cumulative impact of new legislation."* He added *"It is also important to hear that the Dutch Presidency calls for an implementation of the Paris agreement in such a way as to allows the EU to meet its targets without this negatively impacting on competitiveness and the level playing for EU industry"*

He also commented on the intervention of the Mayor of Thessaloniki, Mr. Yiannis Boutaris, *"Mr.*

Boutaris underlined the critical importance of the refinery located in Thessaloniki for the economic sustainability of his community. I am afraid that we tend to underestimate in Brussels the importance of that contribution in terms of jobs, economic development, and future outlook for all those communities where our refineries and in many petrochemical facilities are located” He added “It is also interesting to note that Mr. Boutaris underlined what probably many stakeholders are not aware of, namely that the latest investments in the refinery considerably improved the protection of the workers and environment”.

John Cooper welcomed the intervention of the Hellenic Petroleum CEO, Grigoris Stergioulis, who commented: *“one tends to speak about the economic benefits of the refining industry but we forget about the social factors. In Greece we have a migrant crisis as you know, and Hellenic Petroleum staff have responded by building a migrant camp in Xios for 1000 migrants. This has reminded us of the social aspects that we take for granted. Industries like ours can provide safe,*

secure well-paid jobs, these are so important for Europe’s society.”

Finally, John Cooper reiterated the industry’s support for the Commissions approach for COP21 and for the Paris deal. He however reminded the Forum that *“until other significant regions of the world take up binding commitments in GHG reductions, translating into a carbon cost for their industries, the best performing EU refineries (as well as the other EILs) need effective and complete protection from carbon leakage”.* He also commented that *“Europe’s strategy, longer term seems to be an ambitious technology strategy, but with limited options and a tendency for picking winners. We strongly believe in the capability of the market to deliver the most effective solutions to achieve environmental targets in an economically sustainable way”.* John Cooper welcomed the confirmation of 7th Refining Forum in the autumn 2016 and thanked the Commission, DG Energy for organising this constructive discussion forum.

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FuelsEurope, the voice of the European petroleum refining industry

FuelsEurope represents with the EU institutions the interest of 41 companies operating refineries in the EU. Members account for almost 100% of EU petroleum refining capacity and more than 75% of EU motor fuel retail sales.

FuelsEurope aims to inform and provide expert advice to the EU institutions and other stakeholders about European Petroleum Refining and Distribution and its products in order to:

- Contribute in a constructive way to the development of technically feasible and cost effective EU policies and legislation.
- Promote an understanding amongst the EU institutions and citizens of the contribution of European Petroleum Refining and Distribution and its value chain to European economic, technological and social progress

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