

**Draft Conclusions
Shadow European Council**

**Energy challenges after
Fukushima**

Brussels, 22 March 2011

1. The 11 March massive earthquake and destructive tsunami have caused extensive and severe damage in North-Eastern Japan, leaving thousands of people confirmed dead, injured or missing, and millions more affected by lack of electricity, water and transportation.

In addition, this tragic natural disaster also provoked major disruptions in the functioning of the Fukushima nuclear power plant, causing an evacuation of hundreds of thousands of people and a huge risk of radioactive contamination. The first priority is the help and support to the affected populations.

2. Obviously, this disaster will have huge consequences on economic and energetic level beyond Japan and the region. Having always been a forerunner in the world on the subject, the European Union has to open a real discussion on this issue. This requires much more than mere stress tests on nuclear power plants on the territory of the Union (of which the energy ministers are also unable to agree) there is an urgent need for

- a broad public debate on nuclear energy in terms of safety facilities, nuclear waste, insurance risk, investment, transparency of data and information;
- a strong support for sustainable alternatives especially the operational potential in the short and medium term benefits of renewable energy;
- a push for an ambitious strategy on energy efficiency with a review and strengthening of the “Energy efficiency plan” and “Road map 2050” presented by the Commission, in order to introduce binding targets and new legislation to speed up the phasing-out of Europe’s fossil fuel dependency.

3. It is time to rise up to the common challenges and strive for a truly European response, instead of resorting to unilateral energy-policies, like too many Member States keep doing. That is why we propose an initiative for a European Energy Saving and Renewable Energy Community, opened to EU members but also to candidate- and neighbouring countries, which includes the following objectives:

- establishing an absolute priority for "low risk" energies like energy saving and renewable energies;
- strengthening standards of all consumer goods including cars;
- helping establish, in the framework of the 2013 -2020 financial perspectives, the highest possible targets for energy saving, renewable energies and electricity infrastructure projects, notably but not exclusively, in the Research, development and innovation area.