

# **GREEK-ALBANIAN COOPERATION IN THE ENERGY SECTOR**

A One Day Conference Convened  
by the Institute of Energy for South East Europe (IENE)

Under the auspices of  
the Albanian Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy and the Hellenic Ministry of  
Development  
and in cooperation with  
the Greek Albanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

**Tirana, January 15, 2009**

## **Introductory Remarks by Const. S. MANIATOPOULOS**

Chairman, Institute of Energy for S.E. Europe (IENE)  
Former Dir. General for Energy of the European Commission

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Honorable Ministers,

Distinguished Speakers and Representatives of Ministries, Organizations and  
Companies,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am extremely pleased to be for the first time in Albania. I am certain that I express  
the feelings of all Greek participants.

We all know the enormous progresses Albania has achieved the last years.

We all know that the transition from a poor and isolated country to a rapidly growing  
economy is always hard and requires a global national effort.

Accordingly, we all understand that the progresses of your country have resulted  
from common efforts of Governments and of your hard working people.

On behalf of our Institute and of all Greek participants I would like to congratulate  
our Albanian participants and wish to Albania further progresses and successes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to be the first speaker of this event.

The "One Day Conference for the Greek – Albanian Cooperation in the Energy  
Sector", is convened by the Institute of Energy for South East Europe (IENE), under

the auspices of the Albanian Ministry of Economy, Trade and Energy and the Hellenic Ministry of Development and in cooperation with the Greek Albanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Let me stress from the very beginning that the realization of this Conference would be extremely difficult without the support of the Public Power Corporation of Greece, of the Greek - Albanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and of all other sponsors of this event. I would like to thank all for their valuable contribution.

This event is the first tangible and effective sign of the will for cooperation of our countries in the energy sector.

We all know that Energy is of fundamental importance for economic and social development, for job-creation, moreover for security and external relations.

We all know that any long-term consideration of energy issues is governed by one constant and absolute priority the energy security. While other major factors, as competitiveness, sustainability and environmental and climate change issues play an extremely important role, energy security remains the key issue of any energy policy.

In the era of globalization, as the energy systems are becoming more complex and the economies more integrated, energy security can be reinforced and secured through investment, commercial, technological etc cooperation between neighboring countries and through open and transparent markets.

This is the main reason why, we in the Institute, we fully support and by all means we promote the idea that energy cooperation could be beneficial for both our countries and an essential factor for the regional development.

We, in the Institute, we strongly believe that regional cooperation, common efforts of neighboring countries, is an extremely valuable weapon in the difficult international competition for energy security and sustainability.

We, in the Institute, we are persuaded that economies of countries like Albania and Greece, depending on the availability of energy imports at reasonable prices and on the unpredictability of energy prices, risk to suffer in periods of instability of energy and / or financial markets.

Nowadays the risks are rapidly increasing. The world and much more the economies of energy importing countries are facing a generalized instability of the financial markets. Our countries are facing energy crises due to interruptions of supplies, to extreme energy prices volatility, to recession and geopolitical instabilities. Unemployment, poverty, instability of social and political systems are threatening our expectations for a better future, for a better quality of life.

Under these circumstances, we are committed in the Institute to work for regional energy cooperation, for better understanding of common problems, for an open minded search of mutually beneficial policies and projects.

We are also committed to support any effort made by Governments, Organizations or Companies to overcome the crises.

We do not underestimate the fact that cooperation in the energy sector is not an easy, neither a commonly accepted process. But, we believe that joint efforts for common solutions can alleviate a part of risks and we do not forget that energy cooperation was the fundamental idea of the establishment of the European Institutions for coal and nuclear energy, which resulted to the unique experiment of the European Union.

Regional cooperation was the real meaning of common European energy policies. Regional energy cooperation was the philosophy of the creation of the "S.E. Europe Energy Community". Regional Energy cooperation is the objective of the "Energy Charter Treaty", etc.

Let me add that Regional Energy Cooperation is also the basic idea behind our modest contribution, the Annual Conference of our Institute, the "S. E. E. Energy Dialogue Process", organized in 2007 and 2008 in Thessaloniki. Last year we appreciated the participation in our Conference of several Albanian energy personalities. Hopefully this year, in June, we will have a much larger and more active participation from Albania.

During this long day of the Conference we will have the opportunity to hear extremely important information on the energy affairs of our countries and on potential energy cooperation from distinguished Albanian and Greek Speakers.

Therefore, I will limit my contribution to a very short presentation of our Institute, the "Institute of Energy for South East Europe" the IENE.

IENE is an independent non-governmental, non-profit organization which supports and promotes energy issues and contributes to development for a better future.

IENE was founded in Athens, in July 2003 by 20 "Partners", today increased to 27, independent scientists and business executives concerned with the energy sector.

IENE has become a valuable partner in energy for both the private and public sectors. It is a permanent forum where energy issues can be discussed, analyzed, reformulated and presented.

Our key objective is to participate in the formulation of energy policies, both on the national and international levels, within the broader region of South - East Europe.

IENE aims to contribute to the implementation of the European Union's sustainable development strategy that combines social and economic development with environmental protection.

Nowadays, the Institute plays a significant role in providing public opinion with factual and unbiased information on subjects concerning energy, the environment and sustainable development. IENE organizes public events (e.g. open discussions, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc), provides Information and Documentation in

cooperation with national and international organizations and, of course, focuses its efforts in Greece and in the Energy Cooperation with S.E. Europe.

IENE has an important number of Greek and non Greek members, physical persons and Companies. Our intention is to increase the number of non Greek members and to establish “antennas” in countries of S. E. Europe. IENE would welcome Albanian colleagues or Companies as physical or Corporate members of our Institute.

Let me conclude by expressing my warmest thanks and my appreciation to all participants and especially to Mr. Ruli, Minister for Economy, Trade and Energy, to Mr. Alibali, Deputy Minister and to all high ranking officials for their presence here, today.

I would like also to express my thanks to Dr. Athanasopoulos, Chairman and CEO of PPC, to Dr. Moissis, Chairman the National Council for Energy Strategy of Greece, to Dr. Lekatsas, Chairman of the Hellenic Transmission System Operator, to Mr. Emmanouil Zarogiannopoulos, Secretary General of the Greek - Albanian Chamber of Commerce & Industry in Albania and to many – many other Contributors to the success of this Conference.

Thank you for your kind attention.