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ENERGY AND CLIMATE 2030: “BUSINESS AS USUAL” IS NOT AN OPTION

Reacting to the Commission Green Paper on Energy and Climate 2030, Markus J. Beyrer said: *“BUSINESSEUROPE cannot accept a “business as usual” scenario for EU energy and climate policy that would put our economy at a permanent disadvantage in comparison with our main trading partners. The EU needs a cost-competitive, secure and climate-friendly energy policy for 2030. The Green Paper rightly stresses the importance for Europe’s competitiveness; I look forward to an open debate in this fundamental discussion.”*

Today, the Commission opened the public debate on a 2030 policy framework for Energy and Climate. The EU needs to reassess its approach to energy in light of important international developments. First and foremost, Europe’s major competitors, the US and China are reindustrializing on the back of low energy costs. Meanwhile the current EU energy and climate policy is driving up costs through inconsistencies in EU policies as well as uncoordinated and heavy-handed national government intervention in energy markets. Furthermore, contradictory renewable and CO2 emission targets fail to address the challenge of international competition and risk driving investment outside of Europe.

To restore the confidence business needs for investments in industry and low carbon technologies, Europe needs a more realistic and cost-competitive approach to energy and climate challenges. The Commission’s Green Paper, with its acknowledgement of the importance of competitiveness, is a good start to this debate, although it still puts forward an unrealistic decarbonisation timescale that Europe cannot afford. The high cost lessons from the current EU policy need to be fully addressed while taking technology game-changers like the shale gas revolution in the US and the very limited progress in global climate talks into account.

NOTE TO THE EDITOR

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