

**Joint press release**

**22 March 2012**

**The French Energy Regulatory Commission (CRE) and the Belgian Commission for Electricity and Gas Regulation (CREG) welcome the positive results of the open season launched by Fluxys and GRTgaz of the realization of a new gas transmission interconnection between France and Belgium at Veurne**

The open season jointly conducted by the Belgian (Fluxys) and French (GRTgaz) transmission system operators closed on 6 March 2012. The results are the following:

- the capacity requests of shippers are sufficient to trigger the construction of the new interconnection between the French and Belgian transmission systems at Veurne. The firm capacity to be developed will amount to 270 GWh per day, corresponding to 995 575 cubic meters per hour. The commissioning of the interconnection is planned for the end of 2015.
- the allocation process of capacity allows satisfying all the binding requests submitted by the shippers.
- there is still capacity available from the third year after the commissioning date. This capacity will be commercialized according to the rules set out in the European network codes.

The French (CRE) and Belgian (CREG) regulators jointly welcome these results and the success of this open season. This cross-border coordination meets the objectives of the Third Energy Package.

This new interconnection between the networks will allow, for the first time, to physically transport non odorized gas from France to Belgium. It could transport up to 8 billion cubic meters of gas per year towards Belgium from the Dunkirk LNG terminal and the French hub PEG Nord, and from Belgium towards other North-West European markets.

In addition, this innovating project fits in the European dynamics towards market integration, regional cooperation and security of supply. It will contribute to the fluidity of the transmission system and to the diversification of gas sources between France and Belgium.

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**CRE**

Founded on 24 March 2000, the French Energy Regulatory Commission (CRE) is an independent administrative body. CRE works to guarantee smooth and efficient operation of the electricity and natural gas markets for the benefit of the end-user. It also works to guarantee the absence of discriminatory practices, cross-subsidies or restrictions on competition.

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**CREG**

The CREG is the federal regulator for the Belgian electricity and natural gas markets. In addition to its government advisory role, the CREG is also, among other tasks, entrusted with the supervision of transparency and competition issues in the electricity and natural gas markets, ensuring that market conditions are aimed at the common interest and that they fulfill the needs of the general energy policy, and also with ensuring that essential consumer interests are met.

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