

**Opening Remarks**  
**Round Table on Securing Reliable Natural Gas Supply in the**  
**Context of Sustainable Development in the UNECE Region**

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**Economic Commission for Europe**

It is my pleasure this afternoon to moderate this Round Table on “Securing Reliable Natural Gas Supply in the Context of Sustainable Development in the UNECE Region”.

We are living in rather interesting times as far as the natural gas industries and the energy sector is concerned.

Energy security has once again returned to the top of the political and policy agenda – and for very good reasons. Likewise, the energy sector’s impact on the environment is also in the limelight and receiving considerable media attention, particularly the climate change issue. In addition, governments and the EU Commission are continuing to forge ahead to open up and liberalize energy markets.

These factors are contributing to uncertainty, apprehension and some tension among market participants and governments alike. The heightened sense of concern, whether legitimate or not, about the security and reliability of natural gas supplies is a case in point.

This afternoon we will have the opportunity to hear about the problems, the issues, the causes, and concerns over the security of natural gas supplies.

But it is important to stress that there are clearly two sides to this issue: buyers longing for security of supply and sellers longing for security of demand. Hence, there is a high degree of interdependence between producers and consumers. And, it is by recognizing and taking into account this mutual interdependence that misunderstandings and disagreements can be resolved. Both groups need each other.

With this very short introduction, I would like now to introduce the panellists before we move on to their remarks. I will now introduce the panellists:

Mr. Stanislav Tsygankov  
Director of International Business Development,  
Gazprom, Russian Federation;  
Chairman of the UNECE Gas Centre Executive Board

Mr. Torstein Indrebo  
Vice President, Norsk Hydro, Norway;  
Vice-Chairman of the UNECE Gas Centre Executive Board

Mr. Myroslav Khymko  
Director of Transportation Department, Ukrtransgas, Ukraine

Dr. Andrei Konoplyanik  
Deputy Secretary General, Energy Charter Secretariat, Brussels

Ms. Anne-Sophie Corbeau  
Associate Director, Cambridge Energy Research Associates, Paris

Mr. Grzegorz Markiewicz  
Director of Department, Polish Oil and Gas Company, Warsaw

Mr. Marco Alvera  
Senior Vice President, Supply and Portfolio Development, ENI  
SpA, Italy