The Ministry of Energy of Armenia organized a successful one day information session on the INOGATE programme

On 19 October 2007, the Ministry of Energy of Armenia held a one-day information session in Yerevan on the enhanced energy cooperation between the EU, the Littoral States of the Black and Caspian Seas and their neighbouring countries, which is being supported by the INOGATE Programme.

The information event was organized by the Country Coordinator, Mr. Levon Vardanyan, Head of Development of the Ministry of Energy of Armenia, with the support of the INOGATE Technical Secretariat. The Deputy Ministers of Energy, Mr. Areg Galstyan, Mr. Ara Siminyan, Mr. Levon Shahverdyan as well as Mr. Karen Kagramanyan, head of operations of the Ministry of Energy, participated in the event.

The information session was attended by about 30 participants - representatives from the Ministry of Energy, the TACIS and Balkans/CARDS Monitoring programme, the ongoing EU technical assistance projects, the Armenian National Energy Regulatory Commission, the Oil, Gas and Electricity companies in Armenia, the Armenian Nuclear Station, the Energy Strategy Centre and from other associations involved in the energy sector of Armenia including energy scientific institutes and research centers.

The event was opened by the Deputy Minister Mr. Areg Galstyan, who noted that Armenia–EU cooperation in the energy sector has been very productive and helpful. He especially underlined the importance of the INOGATE programme for Armenia and referred to a number of INOGATE funded projects, including the assistance to the Abovian underground gas storage, which contributed to the improvement of the security of energy supply in the country.

He stressed Armenia’s great interest in expanding the collaboration with the EU in regard to all the areas of this energy cooperation and invited all participants to contribute to this important event.

The Country Coordinator of Armenia, Mr. Levon Vardanyan, presented in detail a historical review from the Baku Conference to the Astana Ministerial Conference, the objectives of the Astana Declaration, the main topics of the agreed Energy Road Map and the priorities of Armenia in all the cooperation pillars (market convergence, safety & security, sustainable development and investments). He also outlined the actions taken or planned in Armenia to achieve the objectives set out in the Astana Declaration.

Furthermore, he explained the roles of the stakeholders in this initiative (Ministry of Energy, Country Coordinator, Working Group Members, regulators, energy companies, energy agencies and international financial institutions). During the presentation, the participants expressed their...
interest in the priorities of Armenia in achieving the objectives of the Astana Declaration, as well as in Armenia’s priority investment projects and the technical assistance projects financed by the EU. Active discussion took place after the presentations.

INOGATE representative Mr. Nikos Tsakalidis held a presentation on the INOGATE work programme, focusing on the following topics:

- INOGATE Programme - new context and main objectives
- Work Programme for 2007-2008 - activities performed and planned
- EU support to the partner countries for regional cooperation, policy and institutional reform, including ongoing and upcoming technical assistance projects
- Additional support provided through other programmes

The participants made a number of suggestions and raised some questions regarding the details of upcoming technical assistance projects, information on how INOGATE can provide support in realizing investment projects and also regarding the market convergence process and the forthcoming 3rd Ministerial Conference.

The participants paid particular attention to issues pertaining to the diversification of gas and oil supply, harmonization of technical standards in oil, gas and electricity and transfer of best practices in the field of management techniques and procedures in oil and gas companies.

The representatives of the Armenian National Energy Regulatory Commission spoke about the training course that they attended in September 2007 in Kiev and its benefits. It was mentioned that similar trainings are needed for other involved stakeholders like energy companies.

The representatives of energy companies spoke about the increased need to improve oil products supply in the country and the need for training of the energy specialists in the area of standardization.

INOGATE representatives explained how the programme can facilitate the necessary developments mentioned by the participants and described the main steps and key issues of the market convergence process.

It was also explained how INOGATE monitors the measures taken by the partner countries in relation to the objectives set out in the Astana Declaration. The participants were informed that a Monitoring Report will be produced for submission to the Ministers before the 3rd Ministerial Conference.

All participants expressed their gratitude for the organization of this information session and proposed to hold similar events in the future to update the stakeholders on the activities of the INOGATE programme.
The INOGATE representatives provided the participants with relevant contact information, as well as with advice on where the participants could find and download additional information on the INOGATE website.

The Country Coordinator and the INOGATE representatives thanked all participants for their attendance and their active participation in this information event.