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**PRESSE-MEDDELELSE
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**INFORMATION A LA PRESSE
INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA
MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

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ENERGY SAVING - THE ORDER OF THE DAY

Dr Guido Brunner, Member of the Commission with responsibility for energy, research, science and education, delivered the official opening address at the 9th Conference of Mining Salaried Staffs, held in Gelsenkirchen on 19 May 1979.

In his speech, Mr Brunner referred to current problems relating to energy policy in the European Community.

He emphasized the difficult conditions at present affecting the energy sector, in which there was a world-wide oil shortfall of 5-6%. There was, however, no cause for panic, but rather for greater efforts on the part of all concerned. The order of the day was now to adopt a rational approach to the use of energy and not to yield to speculative tendencies.

The Community has been pursuing a policy of energy-saving for six years and this had made it possible to achieve a steady 7-8% decrease in consumption and to reduce dependence on energy imports from 63 to 56%. The Community had moreover adopted additional measures in March with a view to affecting a further 5% saving in oil; this corresponded to a cut of 25 million tonnes with respect to the originally estimated level of consumption. As a result, the Community's oil bill would be reduced by \$ 3 000 million.

These additional measures had already led to an 18.5 million t reduction in oil consumption. On Thursday, 17 May 1979, this energy-saving objective was again confirmed in the Council and the Member States were enjoined to implement the measures rapidly.

By announcing its readiness for an energy-saving policy the Community was also demonstrating to the oil-producing countries its willingness to contribute to an easing of the supply situation. This was important if it was desired to reach an understanding with these countries. The Community should now endeavour to achieve such an understanding, since a close interdependence had been shown to exist.

Consequently, the European Community intended to begin discussions with the oil-producing countries at expert level in order to explore each side's position and demonstrate the effect of supply policy on economic conditions. These discussions would be conducted in a spirit of mutual respect as regards each side's independence in opinion forming and decision making. Mr Brunner was confident that in this way a stabilization of developments in the world energy markets could be achieved.