



Speech by President von der Leyen at the Summit on the Future of Energy Security

London, 24 April 2025

Prime Minister, my dear friend Keir,

Dr Birol, dear Fatih,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be back in London. Thank you, Prime Minister, for co-hosting this vital summit – thank you for the UK's continued leadership on energy security, and more generally, for the excellent cooperation between the EU and UK. Energy is vital to this cooperation. Our work is centred around the North Sea. This is a powerhouse indeed, for clean energy and the energy of the future. The North Sea region has it all, as you said: offshore wind, marine energy, hydrogen, carbon capture and storage. But what is just as important as the resources out there is regulatory certainty. And if you don't believe in this, just think of electricity trading – where uncertainty has been especially bad for business. So, certainty is something which we can deliver, the EU framework offers, it is what investors are looking for. And therefore, dear Keir, I think this is something where the two of us should team up and deliver on what is needed for the investors. The investors, for many years, are ready to start. They just need the regulatory certainty; they need the predictability, and they need one framework to work with. So, let us deliver on that one.

And thank you, dear Fatih Birol, for the excellent work you are doing. You keep energy security at the forefront of global attention.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are facing a new paradigm for energy security. In Europe, we witnessed firsthand how Russia intentionally weaponised energy supplies. In the Middle East, conflict has stoked instability and threatened global shipping. And across the Atlantic, the threat of tariffs risk further disruption of crucial supply chains. And that is why today's meeting is so timely. Because reliable and affordable energy is the lifeblood of our economies, it underpins our national security, and it sustains our industrial and economic competitiveness.

The positive news is that we see progress on energy security worldwide. Over the last decade, 1 billion people have gained reliable access to electricity. If we deliver on the collective goals we set at COP28, this will help in addition. If we triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency, we will bring reliable and affordable energy to millions more around the world. Because clean homegrown renewables not only strengthen our resilience, they of course also spur new jobs and more innovation within our own economies. As our energy dependency on fossil fuels goes down, our energy security goes up. That is the lesson we have learnt in Europe.

At the start of this decade, we were over-reliant on one single supplier for our energy needs. Let me give you some figures: Russia provided 45% of our gas, 50% of our coal, and nearly one-third of our oil. For decades, we failed to recognise the costs that came with this dependence. The risk of blackmail, economic coercion, prices shocks; that reality was exposed after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russia tried to exploit our over-dependence by cutting us off the gas. They tried to cause economic turmoil and weaken our resolve for Ukraine. They failed. We answered with REPowerEU. We diversified our supply. We accelerated the clean energy transition. We went from 45% of our gas imports coming from Russia, down to 18%. We went from one-in-five barrels of oil down to one-in-fifty, a tenfold reduction. And we went to zero coal from Russia. In sum, we cut funding for Russia's war economy and strengthened our energy security.

But we all know that there is so much more to do. In two weeks, our Energy Commissioner, Dan Jørgensen, will present a roadmap, with concrete measures to phase out all imports of Russian fossil fuels. So that we will no longer rely on a hostile power for our energy supply. On gas supply, we have not forgotten how the United States immediately stepped in with LNG when we needed it during the energy crisis. And how we received additional pipeline gas from Norway. And how countries further away, like Japan and the Republic of Korea, worked very closely with us on global markets, to ensure our immediate energy security. These energy partnerships, including imports of LNG from the United States, remain of strategic importance for the European Union.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is not only a question of alternative suppliers. We reduced our vulnerability to Russian fossil fuels by accelerating the roll-out of homegrown renewable energy. In the medium term, this is the best means to ensure energy security. The progress is already visible. Renewables now account for 47% of our electricity mix. Solar and wind are our two fastest growing energy sources. Last year alone, we installed 78 gigawatts of new renewable capacity, that is enough to power London 16 times over.

And we must go further. Earlier this year, we presented an Affordable Energy Action Plan. We will boost our energy and electrification projects. It will help us complete interconnections and grids, so that wind from the North Sea or solar from Spain can power homes and industries across our continent.

We are also working to ensure that the clean industries of the future are built in Europe. With the Clean Industrial Deal, we will mobilise over EUR 100 billion to support clean manufacturing. This means new high-skilled jobs in Europe, lower energy costs, reduced demand for fossil fuels, and greater autonomy over our energy supplies.

This progress is crucial, because globally we see threats to energy security intensifying. We see hostile actors target critical infrastructure with physical and cyberattacks. We see Houthi militants use missiles to strike international shipping, including oil tankers. We also see increased pressure on grids and infrastructure, as global demand for energy surges. In 2024, energy demand grew by almost twice its recent average. This is driven by increased consumption of electricity and the growing energy needs in areas such as electric mobility, air conditioning, and of course ever more powerful Artificial Intelligence – all the data centres are energy eaters par excellence.

On the other hand, and that is bitter: Progress to connect the world's poorest to electricity has slowed. This threatens to leave tens of millions of people, particularly in Africa, living in energy insecurity.

So, Ladies and Gentlemen,

These global challenges require a collective response. We need greater collaboration across the entire energy value chain. I see five steps where we need to step up cooperation to deliver energy security.

First, we need to set a clear vision of the direction of travel and a determination to follow it. Earlier this year, alongside many of you here, we launched the Global Energy Transition Forum. The Forum can help us to deliver on the promises we made at COP28 in Dubai. Our promise to triple renewable energy capacity and double energy efficiency by 2030. To achieve this, we need to keep track of progress. Because you all know the old saying: 'Only what gets measured gets done.' As we discussed, dear Keir, the Forum will work hand-in-hand with the Global Clean Power Alliance, which you launched last year. Because we share the same goals, and we aim for the same results. So that by working together, the two of us can deliver.

Second, we need to turn targets into very concrete projects. Not only at home but also abroad. Europe is doing this through the Global Gateway initiative and our Scaling Up Renewables in Africa campaign. European funds are helping to build infrastructure, to ensure that clean energy is available where it is most needed. For example, with the Zambia-Tanzania energy interconnector. This will connect the power grids of Southern and Eastern Africa. It will bring energy security to millions across Africa.

Third, we need critical raw materials. You all know it here in this room. This is all the more important in the context of looming trade restrictions and export bans, we see it already. These minerals are the building blocks of the clean transition. Work is already underway, and I would like to commend here again the International Energy Agency for its leading role on this crucial topic.

The European Union has signed ten strategic raw material agreements with partner countries. And we launched the first-ever Clean Trade and Investment Partnership with South Africa. This will see Europe invest EUR 4.4 billion in clean energy projects in South Africa. At the same time, it will ensure that European firms have access to the materials they need to power the green transition.

Fourth, we need to develop infrastructure together. This sounds so basic, but it is essential. We need to build grids, interconnectors, and cables. To connect our countries and diversify our energy supplies. That is what we are doing for example with the ELMED connection between Italy and Tunisia. It will be the very first direct current connection between Europe and Africa. We are also helping to develop a connection between Greece and Egypt. These projects will help enhance energy security across both our continents.

And finally, we of course need to work together to protect infrastructure. Both from cyberattacks and physical attacks. Here, we should use the cooperation we have with NATO. Together with NATO, we have taken measures to better prepare and protect ourselves. We are developing capabilities to protect critical undersea cables, that is a new normal. And as we know that these cables cross countries and continents, we are absolutely open and ready to share our experiences and to cooperate on this with our strategic partners and friends.

So, Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is a lot to do. We have gone quite a mile already. But we are at a decisive moment, and the speeches I could listen to today prove how crucial it is now to be here. Thank you again, Fatih, for convening this summit. It is crucial because Europe is ready to work with all of you. We are anyway in close cooperation, but it is a broader offer here. As the saying goes: 'If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together'. And we want to go far.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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