

## T&D Europe all set to upcoming electricity policy challenges

Brussels, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011. On the occasion of its annual General Assembly held in Paris on 18<sup>th</sup> March, T&D Europe<sup>1</sup> has renewed the mandate of its President, Ralf Christian, CEO of the Power Distribution Division of Siemens, appointed a new Executive Committee, both for a period of three years, and has assigned itself the task of further contributing, with the technological solutions provided by the European T&D industry, to answer electricity policy challenges posed to Europe and beyond.

The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on the economic situation in the T&D industry in Europe. Figures generally indicated positive growth for manufacturing industry production, and particularly energy equipment, both in 2010 and 2011, but contrasted situations with regards to investments, particularly in infrastructures. Overall, the economic framework in Europe is marked by new trends, in particular

- The growing penetration, on the European market and globally, of Asian competitors, even if European exports continue to be strong;
- The growing unpredictability of public support schemes for renewable energies, as EU Member States are facing extremely high public deficit and debt rates. Even if, on the medium to long run, such schemes will no longer be required to ensure the economic sustainability of the renewable energy sector, the current development of the electricity system imposes stability;
- The slow growth of investment in electricity infrastructures, particularly in 2010, contrasting with the huge needs described and assessed by the EU (for example in the European Commission communication on energy infrastructures of November 2011) or by ENTSO-E, to reach the energy policy objectives, notably the security of supply and the 20/20/20 targets and move beyond towards 2050.

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<sup>1</sup> T&D Europe ([www.tdeurope.eu](http://www.tdeurope.eu)) is the European Association of the Electricity Transmission & Distribution Equipment and Services Industry, which members are the European National Associations representing the interests of the electricity transmission and distribution equipments manufacturing and derived solutions. The companies represented by T&D Europe account for a production worth over € 25 billion EUR, and employ over 200,000 people in Europe.

T&D Europe members also reviewed the current EU energy policy developments, notably the conclusions of the European Council special meeting on energy and innovation, the Energy Efficiency Plan 2011 and the Roadmap for moving to a competitive low carbon economy in 2050, both tabled by the European Commission in March 2011, and the upcoming European Commission communication on smart grids. The adoption of a specific piece of legislation, in the form of a directive, and the establishment of a very stable and incentivising framework for investments in infrastructures (which implies the full completion of the energy internal market) should be the EU energy priorities, together with a strong boost in energy R&D programmes.

Commenting the dramatic situation in Japan following the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear plant accident, Ralf Christian said: *“We want to pay tribute to the courageous people and to our colleagues from the electrical power industry in Japan, who are fighting in an extremely hostile environment to prevent the worst scenario from happening. At the same time, this tragedy is another call for the accelerated deployment of secure, smart and redundant networks capable of supplying most reliable electricity under any circumstances, including natural disasters”*.