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Brussels, 16 December 1992

HUNGARY/EC ENERGY CENTRE LAUNCHED IN BUDAPEST

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The Hungary-EC Energy Centre was launched yesterday in Budapest at a reception hosted jointly by a representative of the Hungarian Government, and Mr. Hans Beck, head of the EC Delegation in Hungary.

The Hungarian representative welcoming this joint initiative, noted that it represents an important step in the fulfilment of two of the most important aims of the Government's energy policy - improving energy efficiency and improving the environment. He stressed that improving energy efficiency improves the competitiveness of Hungarian industry, saves money for householders, and reduces the need for energy imports. The new Hungary-EC Energy Centre is an important tool in helping to achieve these benefits.

Mr. Beck also supported the launch of the Centre, commenting that the Centre represents an important new phase in the developing relations between Hungary and the EC especially in the energy field. He stressed also that the setting up of the Centre very much reflects the spirit of both the recently signed European Energy Charter and the EC-Hungary Association Agreement.

The purpose of the Centre is to strengthen cooperation in the field of energy management both in Hungary itself and between Hungary and the Community. In particular, energy conservation and efficiency, better management, and improved technologies will be promoted in order to ensure security of supplies for sustainable economic development. Energy efficiency plays a crucial role, not only in economic development, but also in protecting the environment.

The Centre will achieve its aims through a number of activities, including the exchange of experience and research and development results in energy, energy management training courses, information and marketing, energy planning, and the promotion of energy technology transfer between the EC and Hungary.

The Centre will be staffed mainly by Hungarian nationals, including the Director of the Centre. The Director will be assisted by a Senior European Community Adviser.

From the financial point of view, the setting-up of the Centre is a joint Hungarian-EC project. Funds have been made available by Hungarian Institutions, the Commission's Directorate-General for Energy and the EC PHARE programme.