

## ENERGY KEY TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY, CONFERENCE TOLD

*Wednesday, 3 November 2010:* Competitive reliable and sustainable power will be key to economic recovery in Ireland and Northern Ireland; it was stated today at the opening of a major energy conference in Co Louth.

The 2010 EirGrid Group Customer Conference entitled “Working together for a sustainable future” was addressed by EirGrid Group Chairperson Bernie Gray and by Group Chief Executive Dermot Byrne.

The conference in Dundalk is being attended by approximately 200 delegates from the electricity sector including large users of electricity, generators, power suppliers, and wind developers.

**EirGrid Group Chairperson Bernie Gray** said: *“We in EirGrid recognise the serious economic pressures being faced by our customers within the industry and by all of the consumers of power across the island. We are determined to play our part in contributing to competitive, reliable, sustainable power – which we are convinced will be crucial to economic recovery. Standing on a small island off the west coast of Europe, we know the fantastic resource we have here in terms of renewable energy and we are determined to help the people of this island to benefit from it.”*

**Group Chief Executive Dermot Byrne** told delegates that upgraded power infrastructure was vital for the island of Ireland: *“The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, on so many levels, are great places to do business – we have a well-educated population, we are positioned at the heart of the second biggest consumer market in the world, the EU, and we have one of the best resources of renewable energy in the world.”*

He said: *“In providing competitive locations for Foreign Direct Investment, both the Republic and Northern Ireland need to have reliable, world class electricity supplies – delivered using the same technologies that are used worldwide. Cost-effective, high-quality energy cannot be taken for granted – it is in many ways much more crucial than broadband or motorway links.”*

*ENDS*

**Editors notes:**

1. EirGrid holds licences as independent electricity Transmission System Operator (TSO) and Market Operator (MO) in the wholesale trading system in Ireland, and is the owner of the System Operator Northern Ireland (SONI Ltd), the licenced TSO and market operator in Northern Ireland.
2. The Single Electricity Market Operator (SEMO) is part of the EirGrid Group, and operates the Single Electricity Market on the island of Ireland.
3. EirGrid plc, as a leading energy company, is committed to the delivery of a high quality service to all of its customers and stakeholders.

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