

Good evening,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by welcoming you to Strasbourg and thanking you for finding the time to attend this event.

As you will all be aware, it is necessary for Europe decarbonise its energy and transport. This will enable us to deal with environmental issues - such as climate change and air quality - but it will also enable us to improve the security of energy supply and to increase our competitiveness.

The Breughel publication that has brought us together tonight is particular timely given that we, in the Parliament, are currently in the process of

doing two things that are of direct relevance to the decarbonisation of Europe.

* The first is that we are working on a report on this very subject. Indeed, there is a planned discussion on decarbonisation that is to take place in the Plenary Session on Thursday. This report arises from a Commission proposal that follows on from and largely endorses the *Commission Roadmap* that will allow us to achieve a low carbon economy by 2050.

One of the important conclusions of the Parliament's report in response to this proposal was that Europe should develop a sense of urgency or we will risk losing the race to maintain a competitive economy.

Both the Commission and Parliament reports will create a framework for new legislative acts and other measures that will shape the nature of future European investments.

These reports on decarbonising European society set the scene for the upcoming European programmes post-2013. In this respect, there is a whole range of new programmes in the H2020 with the structural funds, the connecting Europe facility to the fore.

This brings me to the second piece of work that we are engaged in at the Parliament that has direct relevance to the decarbonisation of European economies. This is the current preparation of Horizon 2020.

With regard to H2020 in particular, you may not know that I am the rapporteur responsible for the report implementing H2020. In this capacity, the Breughel publication will be a very useful source of inspiration.

I particularly appreciated the examples given of financing innovation support schemes and public procurement mechanisms in the different member states and elsewhere. Moreover, there is a chapter on policy response. This will undoubtedly prove to be of real use for policy makers given the wealth of detail it supplies concerning how best to deploy new technologies in the transport and energy sectors in Europe. Finally, the Breughel publication gives a range of examples showing how we might link public procurement with innovation.

Let me conclude by congratulating the authors for their commendable work and by saying that I very much look forward to the forthcoming debate.

Thank you very much.