

Brussels, 29 March 2010

**Statement of the European Photovoltaic Industry Association (EPIA) on the proposal of the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade to establish a mandatory minimum efficiency requirement for photovoltaic (PV) modules.**

EPIA was enquired by the Czech Photovoltaic Industry Association on the draft by the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade to enact a mandatory minimum efficiency level of 22% for photovoltaic modules.

With more than 200 members active along the whole value chain, EPIA is the world's largest photovoltaic industry association and has already existed for 25 years. Thanks to this, EPIA has acquired a wide expertise on the legislation affecting PV at EU level and in EU Member States, in addition to a thorough knowledge of photovoltaic technology.

According to our knowledge, we believe that establishing a mandatory minimum efficiency requirement for photovoltaic modules would be unique in the EU. As a matter of fact, EU Member State governments only request minimum technical requirements in order to allow a system to benefit from the Feed-in tariff. These requirements are based on certifications of specific EU/international standards, such as:

- IEC 61215: *Thin-film terrestrial photovoltaic (PV) modules - Design qualification and type approval;*
- IEC 61646: *Crystalline silicon terrestrial photovoltaic (PV) modules - Design qualification and type approval;*
- IEC 61730 *Photovoltaic (PV) module safety qualification.*

Applying these standards ensures long-term electrical and mechanical stability and fulfillment of safety measures. As regards efficiency of PV modules, EPIA is not aware of any official requirement, which would set minimum values at EU level or in any EU country.

In addition, none of the existing commercial technologies existing on the market would be able to match today the level of 22% efficiency. Actually, photovoltaic energy relies on an inexhaustible source of energy, the sun, thus setting up a minimum efficiency level is not relevant to assess its environmental impact.

EPIA would also like to underline that, if adopted, the proposed legislation would most probably result in putting an end to the PV market and industry development in the Czech Republic.



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