European Commission: President's Representative

Confidential: for the assigned participant only. Do not share with other participants, including the other members of your delegation. Positions are fictionalised for educational purposes and inspired by, but not identical to, publicly reported positions.

Your delegation: the European Commission (3 members)

You are part of the European Commission delegation. The Commission is the EU's executive: in this crisis your role is to mediate, propose and implement. You are not a party to the dispute; you represent the European interest.

Your legal power is limited. In January 2009 energy policy is still primarily a national competence (the Lisbon Treaty, which gives the EU a formal energy competence, has not yet entered into force). You cannot compel member states to share gas, cannot impose common purchasing, cannot sanction Russia or Ukraine. Your tools are convening authority, technical expertise, moral persuasion, and one practical lever: the Commission can deploy, and partly finance, an **independent monitoring mission** at the metering stations on the Russia–Ukraine border. It is the centrepiece of the EU's response and your delegation's most important contribution.

Key facts (all members):

- The Commission works in tandem with the Czech Presidency: the Presidency chairs, you propose and implement. During the break the two of you post the Presidency text.
- The monitoring mission can be composed of EU officials and industry experts from European gas companies.
- The Commission is already working on the Third Energy Package: ownership unbundling, cross-border cooperation, a new agency of energy regulators. This crisis dramatically strengthens the case for it.

Decision rules: the Commission **does not vote during the negotiation**. It may offer **EU financing in exactly one article** of the protocol, and only if **all three of you sign off**; that is your one bullet, and it makes your internal alignment a negotiation of its own. The Commission has no resources for solidarity measures among member states (it cannot fill anyone's storage); it can only broker them. After Russia, Ukraine and the Council have declared, the **Commission votes last, by majority: support** (you sign and deploy the mission) or **sabotage** (you declare you will not deploy or finance anything under this text). A protocol you disown loses the mission and the EU money, though it may still work without them. Everyone in the room knows this rule; it is your lever against a deal that ignores the European interest.

Your role

Motivations & constraints: You represent the Commission President's office: the function, not the person. You are the Commission's senior political voice: you speak in plenary on the Commission's behalf, engage at the highest level with Russia and Ukraine, and make the final call on political questions inside your delegation. Your immediate priority is restoring gas to Europe; everything else is secondary. Your institutional concern is the Commission's position: this crisis is an opportunity to demonstrate that the EU needs stronger common tools for energy security and that the Commission should be the institution that wields them. Every failure of coordination you witness (bilateral deals, no solidarity mechanism, no common reserves) is an argument for the Third Energy Package. Collect them.

Red lines: No public blame for Russia or Ukraine: lose neutrality and you lose the mediator role, and with it the mission. No commitments the Commission cannot legally deliver: you can offer monitoring and modest financing in one article; you cannot promise binding solidarity or common purchasing; that requires legislation you do not yet have.

Style: In plenary, speak after the member states: offer the Commission's good offices, present the monitoring mission as the EU's key contribution, be the reasonable adult in the room. Meet Russia and Ukraine bilaterally, listen, ask what they need in order to sign, and carry messages. Coordinate closely with the Presidency: let them chair, you propose substance, agree early who does what. Keep your delegation aligned: the one-article financing rule means your three votes must line up before your money exists.

Confidential (for you alone, not for your delegation): You are thinking beyond this crisis. If you play this right, the Commission emerges as Europe's energy-security anchor: the Third Energy Package is currently stalled in Council (several member states resist ownership unbundling and stronger EU coordination), and this crisis is the political shock that can break the logjam. That gives you a subtle institutional interest in a crisis serious enough to motivate reform but resolved through the Commission's mission and mediation, so that the Commission gets the credit. If it resolves too easily, bilaterally between Moscow and Kyiv, the lesson is "the EU wasn't needed"; if it drags on, "the EU is useless". You need the sweet spot. You are also privately frustrated with Germany and Italy, whose bilateral pipeline projects undermine EU solidarity, but you cannot say so publicly without alienating two of the EU's most powerful members. Find indirect ways to make the solidarity problem visible: ask Bulgaria to describe its situation in plenary, and let the contrast with German comfort speak for itself. And remember the vote you hold at the end: a protocol that ignores the European interest can be signed by everyone and still be disowned by you.