

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Pipelay Vessel Castoro Sei Takes Over Laying Nord Stream Pipeline in German Waters/Pipe Laying Ahead of Schedule**

**Zug/Rügen, September 26, 2010.** The Castoro Sei (C6) pipelay vessel reached German waters off the island of Rügen today to continue laying the Nord Stream Pipeline. The Castoro Dieci (C10), a second, smaller vessel specially designed to lay pipes in shallow waters, has laid 27 kilometres of the pipeline in the Bay of Greifswald. The C6 will recover this pipeline string and continue laying the pipeline towards Bornholm, Denmark. "The construction of both lines in German waters is progressing faster than initially planned," said Dr Georg Nowack, Nord Stream AG Project Manager for Germany. "We are almost four weeks ahead of schedule."

The laying-sequence requires the pipeline to be laid down and picked up again at several places. This operation is called "Abandonment and Recovery" (A&R). On September 19, the C10 had sealed the pipeline with a so-called A&R-head and lowered it down on the seabed. The C6 now pulls the pipeline back up into the vessel's main production line. The A&R-head is then removed and additional pipe segments are welded to the pipeline string. The C6 can lay up to 2.5 kilometres of the pipeline every day. By the second half of October, the C6 will have laid the remaining 55 kilometres of the 82 kilometres section in German waters.

The C6 started laying the pipeline in April this year in Swedish waters. Up to 330 people aboard the 150 metre long vessel work around the clock. During pipelay operations, the C6 uses a mooring system to position itself. A total of 12 anchors are placed by anchor handling tugs and taken in by high-powered winches. To avoid interference with ship traffic during anchor handling operations, a 3 kilometre safety zone is implemented around the C6.

The second parallel string of the pipeline is currently being laid by the C10. The pipelay vessel will conclude its work on the Nord Stream project after abandoning the second string east of Rügen. The C6 will pick up this string in September 2011 and continue laying the second line. When both strings are completed in 2012, each will be 1.224 kilometres long. The Nord Stream Pipeline will then transport 55 billion cubic metres (bcm) of natural gas per year – enough to meet the needs of more than 26 million European households.

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**Notes to editors**

**Nord Stream** is a natural gas pipeline that will link Russia and the European Union through the Baltic Sea. The European Union's annual natural gas imports in the year 2007 were approximately 312 billion cubic metres (bcm) and are projected to increase to 516 bcm by the year 2030. This means that by 2030, the EU's annual import needs will have increased by about 200 bcm (Source: IEA, World Energy Outlook, 2009). Nord Stream will meet about 25 percent of this additional gas import requirement by connecting the European gas pipeline network to some of the world's largest gas reserves. The project will be an important contribution to long-term security of supply and a milestone of the energy partnership between the European Union and Russia.

Nord Stream AG plans to have the first of two parallel pipelines operational in 2011. Each line is approximately 1,220 kilometres long, providing a transport capacity of some 27.5 bcm per year. Full capacity of about 55 bcm per year will be reached when the second line goes on stream. This is enough gas to supply more than 26 million European households.

**Nord Stream AG** is an international joint venture established for the planning, construction and subsequent operation of the new offshore gas pipeline through the Baltic Sea. Russian OAO Gazprom holds a 51 percent stake in the joint venture. The German companies BASF SE/Wintershall Holding GmbH and E.ON Ruhrgas AG hold 15.5 percent each, and the Dutch gas infrastructure company N.V. Nederlandse Gasunie and the French energy company GDF SUEZ S.A. each hold a 9 percent stake.

**Nord Stream is included in the Trans-European Energy Network Guidelines (TEN-E) of the European Union.** In 2006, the project was designated a "project of European interest" by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union. Nord Stream is, therefore, recognised as a key project for meeting Europe's energy infrastructure needs.

**Construction of the Nord Stream Pipeline** started in April 2010, after completion of environmental studies and planning and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) along the entire pipeline route. Three pipelay barges have been commissioned to work on the project: Saipem's Castoro Sei carries out the majority of the construction in the Baltic Sea. The Castoro Dieci operates in German waters, Allseas' Solitaire handles construction in the Gulf of Finland as a subcontractor of Saipem. The first pipeline is scheduled to be operational in 2011, the second one in 2012.