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**Acceptance speech – Lisann Krautzberger, CEO of Next Kraftwerke, Austria**

First of all, dear Mr Mexia, thank you very much for your kind words and for the very good introduction of our company. On behalf of the entire team of Next Kraftwerke, it's a great honour to accept this award and I thank you for that. The EURELECTRIC conference this year addresses the consumer side - and the consumer powered transition of the energy system - and this is an idea which has been central to the first steps and the first concept of the virtual power plant that Next Kraftwerke started in 2009.

The idea was to connect emergency power units so that they can assume the same market and grid responsibilities as conventional power plants. Today we have interconnected about 2500 units of renewable energy in our pool and we are constantly working on using the flexibility of both consumers and producers. Those units are connected in our Next Pool, the virtual power plant, and they are operated through the central control system located in Cologne but, nevertheless, they are independent in their operation and in their location and also in their ownership. We are not owners of one of these units. This fact more or less permitted us to also apply the concept to other countries of Europe.

Last year we started to expand our business to Austria and Belgium – I am the CEO of the Austrian subsidiary of Next Kraftwerke. We are just starting to implement our concept also in France today. We are excited to be part of this European energy transition and we think that it is bringing a fast pace change to the whole energy system. Our goal is to integrate renewables on the one hand and to develop new concepts for flexibility offering them at ancillary service markets and the intraday market, as also mentioned in the panel before. Recent developments in Brussels have been very helpful in introducing innovative concepts like our virtual power plant. I'm talking here about the development of the network codes for example – they will harmonise the balancing system and you've seen last year that in Austria the grid operator has changed the concepts for the pre-qualification and market rules. As a result, we are now able to pool small units and be a part of the ancillary service market with our VPP also in Austria – so that's a really good development.

We always say that what was once the privilege of the large, conventional power plants is today shared by a lot of individual ones and, pooled together, they are the same participants as others. On the other side, we have a second policy from Brussels - the state aid guidelines for environmental protection and energy whose goal it is to integrate renewables - and that's exactly what we think is necessary for the European renewables market and we are pushing it in Germany.

We think that we have proven for the last 5 years that renewables can also be the same participants in the market and function as conventional systems. We hope that we are able to implement our technology in other European countries such as Belgium, France, etc.

Thank you very much and have a nice day!