

EU SUMMIT - EPP PRESIDENT PRAISES SOLIDARITY AND NATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY DEMONSTRATED BY EU LEADERS

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"I welcome the decisions taken yesterday by our European leaders to strengthen our Single Market and our common currency, the Euro, in an attempt to fight the effects of the current economic crisis in Europe", said the President of the EPP, Wilfried Martens, today.

"By rejecting any temptation to shift towards protectionist and nationalist measures, our European leaders have demonstrated responsibility and solidarity at the same time", Martens continued.

"Clearly, safeguarding our citizen's jobs, supporting our SMEs, and restoring trust into our ailing banking system should be our first priority now. We need to preserve the stability of our financial systems in Europe, guaranteeing at the same time that taxpayers' money is spent in a responsible and coordinated manner to avoid more serious damage being inflicted to our European economy and all our citizens".

President Martens then underlined that the Common Market needs to be protected *"for the wellbeing of all our citizens, both in Eastern and Western Europe". He remarked that "no distinctions between so-called "old" and "new" member states were made during the Summit, but that, on the contrary, the principle of national responsibility and solidarity between all EU member states was maintained."*

Finally, the President of the 73-strong pan-European party mentioned that the Social Market economy, the building bloc of the political and economic thinking of the centre-right, again proved itself to be the only viable solution to the current crisis.

"According to our shared values", he concluded, the economy is not an end in itself but a means for our society to promote prosperity for all our citizens. We want a free-market economy which has as its main pillars the principles of an efficient market economy, social justice and personal freedom. We fight for a more sustainable, competitive and value-driven society in which supervisory and regulatory authorities - both at European and international level - cooperate more closely in order to avoid the resurgence of further financial crisis in the future."

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