

EPP WELCOMES APPOINTMENT OF LUC VAN DEN BRANDE AND ISIDORO GOTTARDO

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The EPP congratulated **Luc Van den Brande** on his election as President of the Committee of the Regions (CoR), and **Isidoro Gottardo** as President of the EPP Group from 2008 to 2010.

The EPP President, **Wilfried Martens**, said "they will be a valued asset to the EPP political family and to the CoR. I fully support their program for the coming years and wish them every success."

During his term of office, Mr Van den Brande vows to project the voices of regional and local authorities at European level, and to make the CoR a more proactive and prospective institution in the European decision-making process. In an era of globalisation, regions and cities are gaining considerable importance, *"the more global the problems become, the more people look for security and solutions at levels of government that they recognise, that they can access and that are readily able to contact"*, said Mr Van den Brande. He therefore underlined the need to involve all levels of governance when making decisions on the future of Europe, and called for the regions, Member States and EU Institutions to work together to *"build a Europe in partnership."*

Upon his re-appointment, Isidoro Gottardo confirmed that communication with the citizens would remain a priority for the Group, *"we want citizens to understand the added value of a strong united Europe."* The EPP Group believes that there are a number of global challenges, including energy supplies and climate change, which cannot be solved by the European Union alone. Therefore, enhanced dialogue and exchanges of best practice with cross-border and neighbouring regions through the development of new legal instruments, such as the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation, will be essential for the EPP Group over the next years.

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