

EPP LEADERSHIP VISITS WASHINGTON, MEETS WITH PARTY LEADERS, PARLIAMENTARIANS AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

12-10-2009



A 6-member delegation of the European People's Party (EPP), led by its President, **Wilfried Martens**, along with Secretary General **Antonio Lopez-Isturiz**, concluded today a successful 5-day visit to Washington DC. The visit was hosted by the International Republican Institute (IRI), the partner organization of the EPP which, for the past 4 years, has strengthened together with the EPP transatlantic relations on a political level. The purpose of the EPP visit was to strengthen relations with the Republican party, to get an insight in the new foreign and security policy of the Obama administration, and to discuss prospects for global economic recovery and the future global financial architecture with the IMF and with relevant experts.

The delegation was received by IRI Chairman, Senator **John McCain** (R-AZ) and discussed current foreign policy challenges such as Afghanistan, Iran, terrorism etc. Senator McCain also explained to the EPP leadership his *de facto* role as "loyal opposition" to the Obama administration.

The EPP delegation also had the opportunity to meet with Senators **Jon Kyl** (R-AZ) and **James Inhofe** (R-OK) as well as Congressmen **Lincoln Diaz Balart** (R-FL), **Dana Rohrabacher** (R-CA), **Mario Diaz Balart** (R-FL), **Keith Ellison** (D-FL-MN), **Ted Poe** (R-TX), and **Mike Rogers** (R-MI).

The delegation visited the headquarters of the Republican National Committee (RNC) and was received by RNC Co-Chairman **Jan Larimer**. In particular, Wilfried Martens and Jan Larimer reviewed the strong relations that have developed in the last 4 years between the EPP and the Republican party and how these relations can be further strengthened. For this purpose, Martens invited Larimer to visit next year the EPP headquarters in Brussels. The delegation also met with former RNC Chairman and current Co-Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Debates **Frankahrenkopf**.

Moreover, the EPP delegation met at the White House with Advisors on European Affairs from the office of the US Vice President, and at the State Department with **Nancy McEldowney**, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the European Bureau as well as high-ranking diplomatic officials from the Office of European Union Affairs and the Office of Multilateral Trade Affairs. At the Department of Defense, the delegation met with **Jim Townsend**, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for European and NATO Policy.

The delegation also had the opportunity to meet with internationally-recognized US statesmen, the former Secretaries of State **Henry Kissinger** and **Lawrence Eagleburger**. In particular, Wilfried Martens and Henry Kissinger had the opportunity to discuss in detail current global foreign policy challenges. The EPP delegation also had meetings with scholars at the Hudson Institute, led by **Ken Weinstein**, and at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, led by **George Weigel**. The delegation also met with high-ranking representatives at the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and at the US Chamber of Commerce where they discussed the prospects for global economic recovery and the future global financial architecture. The EPP delegation also met with an IRI discussion group of 30 young Washington-based opinion-makers and experts who follow European affairs; the meeting was hosted by IRI President **Lorne Craner**.

In addition, EPP President Wilfried Martens presented his latest book "*Europe: I Struggle, I Overcome*" to a group of over 50 scholars, diplomats and journalists at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, which was followed by a lively discussion. Martens also presented his book to a group of distinguished Washington-based journalists at a meeting hosted by EU Ambassador **John Bruton**.

The visit was concluded on Monday with a meeting at the European-American Business Council.

[For more information:](#)

Kostas Sasmatzoglou, Spokesman, Tel. +32-2-2854147
Javier Jiménez, Press Officer, Tel: +32-475480446

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