

MARTENS CONGRATULATES CDU SUCCESS IN SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN

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European People's Party President Wilfried Martens congratulated today CDU President Angela Merkel for the victory and *great success* of her party in the state of Schleswig- Holstein, where the CDU received 40.2 percent of the vote yesterday, securing one seat short of a total majority in the regional parliament.

This success is not only a success for the CDU in Schleswig- Holstein but also for the CDU as whole and thus for you as its President, said Martens in a letter sent today to Angela Merkel.

The Schleswig-Holstein election was the first of two tests of support this year for Schroeder and CDU leader Angela Merkel before the 2006 national election. *I am convinced that this positive trend will continue in the upcoming elections in Nordrhein-Westfalen*, he added.

In his letter, Martens expresses his personal support to Merkel: *Germany is in deep crisis. It needs strong politicians, ready for wide-spread reforms. The CDU has once again proved that it has this potential. I am convinced that we will succeed together to change Germany's Government in the 2006 general election*, Martens concluded.

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