

MICHAEL SCHNEIDER ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE EPP/CoR AND RAMON LUIS VALCARCEL SISO CANDIDATE FOR CoR PRESIDENCY

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During its constitutive meeting for the 2010-2015 mandate, **Michael SCHNEIDER**, State Secretary, Delegate of the State of Saxony-Anhalt for the German Federation, was today elected President of the [EPP Group in the Committee of the Regions](#) by acclamation for a 2 and a half year renewable term. In his opening statement, President Schneider expressed that "European policy must always be very close to local politics and to the people we represent at home." He also took the opportunity to share two views for the future Group of the EPP in the CoR, which he has learned from his experience as first Vice President of the EPP Group, Vice President of the CoR and head of the Commission for Territorial Cohesion. "We would be well advised if we can look beyond this institution and maintain contact with other bodies including the European People's Party, the EPP Members of the European Parliament, EPP Commissioners and external associations" he said. He also stressed the need for a unified EPP Group, which takes time to identify the important issues and debates with each other in

order to achieve a well-reasoned conclusion, which can be easily explained to Europe's citizens. The newly elected President also praised **Isidoro GOTTARDO** for his work over the past six years at the helm of the EPP/CoR. **Michel LE BRUN**, Member of the Walloon Parliament in Belgium, was named 1st Vice-President of the Group.

In a second vote, **Ramón Luis VALCÁRCEL SISO**, President of the Autonomous Community of Murcia, Spain, was elected to be the EPP candidate for Presidency of the CoR with 75% of the vote. Following on from the work of outgoing President, Luc Van den Brande, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso pledged to get straight to action. "I am convinced that together we have the commitment to carry on the work of this Group and move the Committee of the Regions forward." Should the bid for CoR Presidency be successful, the EPP would not only have the largest Group in both the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions, it would also boast Presidency of all of the main institutions with Jerzy Buzek in the European Parliament, Herman Van Rompuy at the European Council, Jose Manuel Barroso heading up the European Commission, and last but not least Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso as President of the Committee of the Regions.

The President of the EPP, **Wilfried MARTENS**, and EPP Secretary General, **Antonio LOPEZ-ISTURIZ**, who also observed the elections, congratulated the newly elected President of the EPP Group and the EPP's President-designate for the Committee of the Regions adding that the party looks forward to a continued close working relationship with the EPP/CoR.

Note for editors

The EPP Group is once again the largest political group in the Committee of the Regions with 130 locally and regionally elected representatives, even without the UK Conservatives who formally left the Group as of today. The CoR is a consultative body to the European Union, which was created in 1994 to give representatives of local government a say over the content of EU legislation.

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