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## Ireland: EPP President Wilfried Martens expresses sorrow for the passing away of Garret FitzGerald

Brussels, 19 May 2011



The President of the European People's Party (EPP) and former Prime Minister of Belgium, **Wilfried Martens**, has expressed his sorrow for the passing away of former Taoiseach (Prime Minister) of Ireland and Fine Gael leader **Garret FitzGerald**, who was 85 years old.

Garret FitzGerald was appointed Foreign Minister in 1973 and was elected leader of EPP member-party Fine Gael in 1977. He served twice as Taoiseach between 1981 and 1987.

"I am very saddened by the loss of my good friend and colleague Garret FitzGerald - he was a great Irish statesman and a great European. In the European Council, we worked together to bring to an end the period of economic and political "eurosclerosis", with the adoption in 1986 of the Single European Act, which re-launched the integration drive by framing Europe's single market. Garret FitzGerald continued, until very recently, to be an outspoken champion of the European Union in Ireland," President Martens underlined.

"I know I speak for the entire European People's Party, when I say that Garret FitzGerald will be deeply missed. His family and friends are in my thoughts and prayers," Wilfried Martens added.

### Note to editors:

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the centre right, which currently includes 75 member-parties from 39 countries, the Presidents of the Commission, Council, and Parliament, 15 EU and 6 non-EU heads of state and government, 13 members of the European Commission and the largest Group in the European Parliament.

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