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Netherlands: statement of EPP President Wilfried Martens on the formation of the new Liberal-led government in the Netherlands

Brussels, 3 October 2010



The following text is a statement of the President of the European People's Party (EPP), **Wilfried Martens**, on the formation of the new government in the Netherlands:

"The formation of the new Liberal-led VVD government, with the participation of the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA) - a member-party of the EPP - plans to become a minority government and will receive in parliament the support of the PVV, an anti-Islamic party.

After months of negotiations, majority coalitions were doomed to failure as a result of the regretful position of the PVDA, the Social democrat party, which refused to form a unity coalition of democratic parties: Liberals, Social democrats and Christian democrats.

In the Netherlands, a coalition government will now be formed, which will be led by the Liberals but, like some other past and present governments in the European Union, it will depend on the support of a party that considers Islam as a political ideology. Unlike the PVV, the Dutch Christian democrats and the Liberals see Islam as a religion and their minority coalition government will defend fundamental freedoms and European values, together with other parties for broader parliamentary support.

Nevertheless, I deplore this political evolution because it can threaten the understanding, the cohesion and the solidarity in our European societies. It is the duty of the major political families in Europe to reflect on this unfortunate reality and to combat it jointly. As in the past, the EPP will continue to refuse to work with extreme right and extreme left parties at the European Union level.

The Congress of CDA yesterday clearly declared in resolutions that it supports the rights of all Dutch citizens, regardless of their religion and beliefs, and repeated its committed to tolerance, freedom of belief and freedom of expression, in a society of solidarity.

I trust that in the long Christian democrat tradition of the CDA, its politicians will offer tangible proof of these commitments in the government and in the parliament, and that the political agreement will be compatible with free and pluralistic democracy, which respects human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law, which are basic EPP values."

Note to editors:

The EPP is the largest and most influential European-level political party of the centre-right, which currently includes 73 member-parties from 39 countries, the Presidents of the Commission, Council, and Parliament, 15 EU and 5 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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