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EPP: conclusions of European Council on economic reforms a quantum leap forward

Brussels, 17 June 2010



The President of the European People's Party (EPP) **Wilfried Martens** welcomed this evening the European Council's conclusions on economic reforms, EU 2020, and Estonia's accession to the Eurozone. These conclusions were to a large extent prepared yesterday at the EPP Summit of heads of state and government and institution leaders in Meise.

"I welcome the conclusions of the European Council on economic reforms since they represent a quantum leap forward in the stabilization of the European monetary union, and a substantial improvement in the fiscal coordination of our national budgets at European level. I am pleased that the European Council is following the path set-out by the EPP leaders at yesterday's Party Summit," Martens underlined.

"There is greater willingness to act among our European leaders today. European governments - and foremost EPP governments who currently form the majority inside the European Council - are seizing the historic momentum for change. We have all learned now from the economic and financial crisis to act swiftly in order to avoid the negative effects of prolonged economic stagnation in Europe. By agreeing on tighter fiscal rules, by boosting our efforts for greater competitiveness and economic growth, and by establishing a crisis resolution mechanism to cope more effectively with emergencies, the European Council has made a significant contribution to greater social and economic cohesion in Europe. In this sense, I am convinced that the Task Force on budgetary discipline and crisis management chaired by **Herman Van Rompuy** will outline the necessary reforms to make Europe once again a fast-growing and economically dynamic global player," the EPP President said.

"I also welcome the adoption of the EU 2020 Strategy put forward by Commission President **Jose Manuel Barroso** as it provides new and integrated policies which will help Member States to implement the necessary structural reforms. EU 2020 is an ambitious program, but it also sets out manageable and measurable targets which, once achieved, will open up the job market for our 500 million citizens in Europe, and therefore give rise to more sustainable and smart growth in Europe," Martens added.

"Finally, the decision to accept Estonia as the newest member of the Eurozone is very good news. It proves that even in difficult times, Member States are fully capable of achieving low debt levels and meeting the Eurozone criteria," the EPP President concluded.

The EPP Summit, which was hosted by President **Wilfried Martens** and prepared today's European Council meeting, included the following participants: the Presidents of the European Council, the European Commission, and the European Parliament, **Herman Van Rompuy**, **Jose Manuel Barroso**, and **Jerzy Buzek** and 12 EU heads of state and government, including **Angela Merkel** (Germany), **Jean-Claude Juncker** (Luxembourg), **Donald Tusk**, (Poland), **Silvio Berlusconi** (Italy), **Viktor Orban** (Hungary), **Fredrik Reinfeldt** (Sweden), **Andrius Kubilius** (Lithuania), **Lawrence Gonzi** (Malta), **Traian Basescu** (Romania), **Boyko Borisov**, (Bulgaria) **Jan-Peter Balkenende** (The Netherlands), and **Yves Leterme** (Belgium).

Jyrki Katainen, Deputy Prime Minister of Finland and EPP Vice President, and **Josef Pröll**, Vice Chancellor of Austria, also attended the Party Summit. EPP opposition leaders **Mariano Rajoy** (PP, Spain), **Antonis Samaras** (ND, Greece), **Janez Jansa** (SDS, Slovenia), **Nicos Anastasiades** (DR, Cyprus), **Pedro Passos Coelho** (PSD, Portugal), and **Mikulas Dzurinda** (SDKU-DS, Slovakia), were also present.

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, 14 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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