

LETTER to ECR Group MEPs

Strasbourg, 8th July 2010

Dear Colleagues,

We sincerely regret that unwittingly offence was caused to some members of our Group over the way the proposal to merge the positions of Chairman and Deputy Chairman into a co-chairmanship was made on Tuesday.

It was never our intention to ignore due process or impose any policy on the group which did not command widespread support.

This was simply an Anglo-Polish proposal to the whole Group for its consideration.

The reason why it was an Anglo-Polish proposal lie in the events of last July when the actions of a former member of the Conservative Party created a particular challenge for our two delegations and parties. We were able to work closely together to overcome that problem last summer but in recent discussions we felt that a new arrangement might consolidate and reinforce our cooperation. Before suggesting it to other members of the Group we thought it right and proper for our respective party leaders, who had been involved in the discussions last summer, to consider any proposed changes hence the origins of the agreement last week.

But the agreement was not a decision. All that was agreed was to make the proposal jointly to the delegations and parties of the whole Group. It is now for the Group as a whole to decide. This will be done at a Special Meeting this September.

We believe the proposal to merge the positions of Chairman and Deputy Chairman into a co-chairmanship will contribute greatly to the long-term success of the Group. It will have great symbolic impact, reinforcing our cooperation and demonstrating our common commitment to developing the Group; it will significantly strengthen the group by providing for greater continuity and stability; and it will put our current close working relationship on a more transparent and formal basis.

In that spirit we commend the proposal to you. We hope that in discussing the idea during the weeks ahead a broad consensus will be found. Nothing is more important to the effectiveness and success of the group, which we have all worked so hard to achieve over the past year, than our unity of purpose and sense of mission. We believe a co-chairmanship would underline that unity but it is for the whole of the Group to decide in September.

Yours sincerely,

Michal Kaminski  
Chairman

Timothy Kirkhope  
Deputy Chairman