

Medlemmerne af Folketingets Europaudvalg
og deres stedfortrædere

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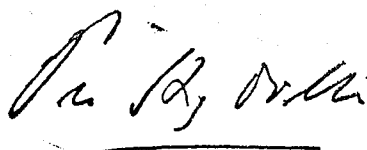
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Til underretning for Folketingets Europaudvalg vedlægges fælles nordisk-baltisk brev om vækstinitiativet forud for Det Europæiske Råds møde i Bruxelles den 16.-17. oktober 2003.


P. H. Orskov



Copenhagen, Tallinn, Helsinki,
Riga, Vilnius, Stockholm
10 October 2003

H.E. Mr. Silvio Berlusconi
President of the European Council
ROME

H.E. Prof. Romano Prodi
President of the European Commission
BRUSSELS

The economic downturn in Europe with slow growth and weak employment performance underlines the need for the Union to continue its reform agenda within the Lisbon strategy. This is the main recipe for the union to deliver a sustainable development with high growth. Action needs to be taken in order to implement the Lisbon objectives by the relevant institutions, like the Commission, the EIB, social partners and Member States.

We therefore welcome that the Commission and the Italian Presidency has highlighted the concept of growth on the Union's agenda. There is a clear need to carefully examine what the Union can do in order to facilitate investments in areas which foster long term growth. Such an approach, "an investment strategy for Europe" must be seen as an integral part of the Union's overall growth initiative, the Lisbon strategy.

We, the Nordic and Baltic Prime Ministers, would like to see the following components discussed as parts of a European growth initiative when we meet in Brussels in October:

- A broad and long term perspective on investments. EU-investment in infrastructure should be concentrated on projects with a genuine European dimension. But this is not enough. There is also a strong argument to focus on research and development, clean technologies and training and education. We need particularly to facilitate participation in these areas by the private sector by stable framework conditions.
- Focus on the TEN-infrastructure projects which raises growth potential and contribute to the functioning of the internal market in EU25. Projects in new Member States would not only help these countries to grow, but also help integrate them with the EU15, thus benefitting the whole Union.
- Removal of administrative and legal obstacles for trans-border projects, which are often the real cause for investments not being made.

- Financing of this initiative must be carried out within the current financial perspective. Clear priorities are therefore necessary. We also need a better coordinated use of the Union's resources and improved cooperation with the EIB in this matter. Furthermore, we think the Union's resources within this field should be more in line with the Lisbon objectives; growth, employment, innovation and environmental considerations. An important part of a long term approach on investments should therefore be to adjust the new financial perspective in line with the Lisbon objectives.

We look forward to an in-depth discussion on these matters when we meet in Brussels on October 16. Let us then send a strong signal regarding our strong commitment for growth. Our meeting should be a starting point for a discussion on how we can facilitate investments as a mean to achieve the Union's long term political goals.

Anders Fogh Rasmussen
Prime Minister of Denmark

Juhan Parts
Prime Minister of Estonia

Matti Vanhanen
Prime Minister of Finland

Einars Repše
Prime Minister of Latvia

Algirdas Mykolas Brazauskas
Prime Minister of Lithuania

Göran Persson
Prime Minister of Sweden