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Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

SECRETARIAT DU CONSEIL DE L'UNION EUROPÉENNE	
SGE13/05574	
REÇU LE	29 MAI 2013
DEST. PRINC.	FM. SEEUWS
DEST. COP.	

Herman Van Rompuy,
President of the European Council

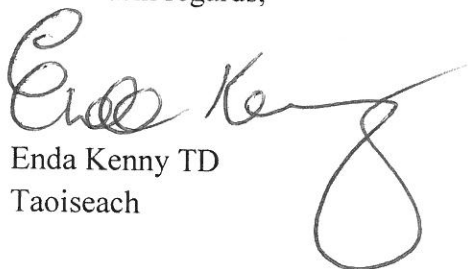
16 May 2013

Dear Herman,

I am writing to let you know that as we enter the final weeks of the Irish Presidency I have begun to make a number of direct approaches to fellow members of the European Council.

In the letter to other Heads of State and Government enclosed I have set out my perspective on critical challenges that remain in our term. Whilst the agenda is demanding I have great confidence in what we can achieve together. I know I can trust in your continued support and I remain at your disposal if you wish to discuss how our shared aims can be achieved.

With warm regards,


Enda Kenny TD
Taoiseach

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Dear Colleague,

As we enter the final stages of the Irish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, I wish to express my thanks for your excellent cooperation to date and to directly seek your support as we address a number of critical challenges in the weeks ahead.

In setting our Presidency theme of Stability, Jobs and Growth, Ireland sought to reflect the collective ambition of the Union, but we have always been convinced that only determined action could deliver on this promise. I am pleased that in almost five months of the Presidency, with your support, we have taken many significant steps to reform Europe's financial system, to strengthen our economic governance and to put our public finances on a sounder footing. In implementing our Presidency Programme, Ireland is also working to ensure that the commitments we made together at the European Council are realised. A key remaining step for our Presidency in this area would be agreement in Council on the Banking Recovery and Resolution Directive.

As we approach the anniversary of the Compact on Growth and Jobs, I believe that we must do more at the European level to boost employment, particularly for our youth, and to help our businesses grow. Legislative measures already under negotiation, particularly those which help us unlock the full potential of the Single Market, can make a disproportionately positive contribution to Europe's recovery. As Presidency, we have worked hard to take forward the priority proposals under the Single Market Act. With your help, we have already reached an agreement with the European Parliament on the Accounting Directive. We will continue to make every effort to bring to a successful outcome the other priority dossiers, in particular Professional Qualifications, Public Procurement, e-Identification and Signature and Posting of Workers. For this, we will continue to rely on your very constructive cooperation. I personally remain at your disposal if you wish to discuss how we might resolve any concerns you might have in relation to specific files.

Trade is a powerful engine for growth and job creation. The European Council in February determined that all efforts be devoted to pursuing trade agreements with key partners, prioritising those negotiations that will provide most benefit in terms of growth and jobs. Last month Ireland organised the very first Informal Council meeting to be dedicated exclusively to trade issues, with a particular focus on the relationship with the United States.

I believe that we cannot lose this opportunity to open negotiations that carry so much potential for growth and employment on both sides of the Atlantic. When I discussed these issues with President Obama I was impressed by his commitment to the creation of a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. Agreement on a negotiation mandate at the FAC (Trade) on 14 June would pave the way for a truly historic agreement and we must show political leadership to see this potential fulfilled. I know that the draft negotiation mandate raises some issues of sensitivity for partners. The Irish Presidency will continue to make every effort to ensure that these concerns are addressed appropriately to ensure that the mandate enjoys the strong support of the Council. A clear opportunity exists here and now, one which we cannot afford to miss. I urge all of us to work constructively and urgently to get these negotiations started in June. Again, I am at your disposal to discuss this very significant opportunity.

One of the most pressing and important tasks for the Presidency is now entering a critical stage. For both stability and growth, it is essential that the Multi-Annual Financial Framework is soon in place. As Presidency we are working hard with the European Parliament to secure its assent, whilst simultaneously advancing the key pieces of sectoral legislation, including those relating to research and innovation (Horizon 2020), CAP and Cohesion, support for SMEs (COSME), investment in infrastructure (CEF) and tackling unemployment, including youth unemployment (EGF and Erasmus for All). These measures are necessary to translate our policies into real action on the ground. We have no time to lose.

I believe that the political agreement on a Draft Amending Budget for 2013, made at the ECOFIN Council this week, was a significant step forward in the process of securing agreement on the MFF. We consider the political agreement to provide €7.3bn in a first stage, reaffirms the importance partners place on the role of the EU budget in delivering growth and jobs across the Union.

This week, the Irish Presidency also participated in a first Trilogue on the MFF with the European Parliament and the Commission. I look forward to your cooperation in reaching a satisfactory outcome on the key outstanding issues of flexibility, a revision clause, own resources and unity of the budget. Our MEPs and our colleagues in the Commission play key roles in this task. We continue to seek your support in your contacts with them.

This work will bring us nearer to final agreement on the MFF which I firmly believe should take place ahead of the June European Council. Time should not be lost as there are jobs depending on our swift action.

I look forward to continued close cooperation in the coming weeks.

With warm regards,

Enda Kenny T.D.
Taoiseach