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EU should get ready for Scottish independence

Press release by SNP MEP Ian Hudghton

SNP MEP and Party President Ian Hudghton has called for the EU institutions to begin preparing for Scottish independence.

Mr Hudghton made the call during a debate today at the European Parliament in Strasbourg with Swedish Prime Minister Frederik Reinfeldt. Sweden currently holds the six month rotating EU Presidency which has focussed on issues including climate change, the economy and employment.

Speaking in the debate, Mr Hudghton lambasted the UK Government for failing to allow a Scottish minister to take part in the official UK ministerial delegation at the Copenhagen climate change conference, even though Scotland has the world's most ambitious climate change legislation. This clearly showed that only independence would allow Scotland to properly contribute internationally, argued Mr Hudghton.

The SNP MEP went on urge the EU to begin preparing for 'internal enlargement', a term used to describe to the process where countries that are part of existing member states achieve their independence.

The only Scots MEP to speak in this major debate in Strasbourg, Mr Hudghton said:

"I represent the European Free Alliance part of our Group which includes the Independence Parties of Wales, Flanders, Catalunya and Scotland. We seek Independent status so that our nations can contribute to European Council meetings and to world events such as the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change.

"The Government and Parliament of Scotland have adopted the world's most ambitious Climate Change Act - with emission reduction targets of 42% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. These are targets we intend to achieve, yet the UK Government refused a reasonable request for a Scottish Minister to take part in the formal proceedings at Copenhagen.

"Such behaviour underlines the fact that it is only with normal Independent Nation status that Scotland can properly contribute to the international community.

"I hope that the European Council will soon be discussing practical arrangements for the internal enlargement of the European Union, with Scotland leading the way."

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