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Strengthening the Role of Nations and Regions in the Recovery Strategy

Press Release from the EFA Group in the EP and the EA Group of the CoR

Tuesday 9 October 2012 (09:00-10:45)
Room: VM1 – Committee of the Regions
Rue Belliard/Belliardstraat 99-101
B-1040 Brussels

Europe's nations and regions have a major role to play in building economic recovery and growth.

That is the key message of a seminar organised this week by the European Free Alliance Group in the European Parliament and the European Alliance Group of the Committee of the Regions.

The seminar is being held at the Committee of the Regions in Brussels as part of European Week of Regions and Cities. It features speakers from Flanders, Wales, the Basque Country and Scotland.

Welsh MEP and President of the EFA Group in the European Parliament **Jill Evans** (Plaid Cymru) said:

"The role of nations and regions and their own devolved governments in economic recovery is today in sharper focus than ever before.

"Central governments across Europe, together with the EU Commission, seem at a loss in dealing with the economic firestorm gripping the continent. The EU has become so obsessed with forcing deep public spending cuts that it has lost sight of the need to invest to create sustainable long term growth. Austerity alone is no answer to the massive economic problems that we face. This approach simply will not work, and it is the most vulnerable who suffer the greatest hardship.

"Targeted intervention at regional and national level can have a significant impact on economic recovery; it can mean the difference between remaining in work or facing unemployment. In Wales we are calling on the Welsh government to invest in the economy through innovative infrastructure schemes such as Build4Wales, investing in schools, hospitals and roads. We are also proposing the Welsh government take a stake in Cardiff

airport, within state aid rules, to boost jobs and encourage investment.

"These are just two examples of the difference that can be made to help economic recovery, keep people in work and create new jobs."

Vice President of the EA Group of the Committee of the Regions, **Stewart Maxwell MSP** (Scottish National Party) said:

"The devolved Governments of the EU's nations and regions are absolutely central to Europe's overall economic recovery.

"In Scotland we are bound by the harsh austerity measures being put forward by the UK Government which have already been shown to be ineffective and damaging to our long-term economic prospects. Instead, we are advocating that the UK Government makes available funding for our list of 'Shovel Ready' capital investment projects which will boost the construction industry, create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

"With the UK in a double dip recession, and the EU nations coping with stagnating growth, it is clear that the voices of Europe's small nations must be heard. We are best placed to determine how best to stimulate growth, protect the most vulnerable in our society and create lasting, sustainable solutions to Europe's economic difficulties."

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For a full agenda visit http://efa.greens-efa.eu/strengthening-the-role-of-nations-and-regions-in-the-recovery-strategy-8140.html

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