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Subject: EU presented with strategy for five million jobs

News from the Party of European Socialists

13 February 2004

EU PRESENTED WITH STRATEGY FOR FIVE MILLION JOBS

Irish government ministers were today presented with a five-point plan for creating five million jobs in Europe and urged to ensure the success of a special EU Summit on jobs in Brussels this Spring.

Former Danish Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen presented a strategy paper -- drawn up by an international network of experts established by the Party of European Socialists -- to Irish Minister for Europe, Dick Roche. The document is the first major contribution to preparations for the summit.

Said Mr Rasmussen, whose high-level network spent a year on analysis and discussion of policy options:

'Ministers set themselves targets four years ago in Lisbon but have failed to live up to their own ambitions.

'It is now time to breathe new life into that Lisbon Strategy if we are to succeed in our aim of making Europe the world's most competitive economy by 2010 whilst generating worthwhile jobs for our people and protecting the environment.

'The strategy I presented today sets out more than 30 policy innovations. I am confident that our recommendations will put Europe back on the right path.

'I was pleased by the positive response I received from the Irish Presidency and I must pay tribute to the commitment of the Irish government to reinvigorating the Lisbon process. I am hopeful that our ideas will be taken up in the debates that will be held over the coming months.

'Success at the Spring Summit is crucial for the development of Europe.'

The strategy paper presented by Mr Rasmussen is published on the website of the Party of European Socialists -- www.pes.org Pictures of today's meeting between Mr Rasmussen and Mr Roche are available on request.

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