



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**

**Brussels, 19 July 2010
PCE 169/10**

**Remarks by
Herman VAN ROMPUY,
President of the European Council,
following his meeting with
Doris LEUTHARD,
President of the Swiss confederation**

I am very pleased I had the opportunity to meet President Leuthard. I welcome her and her delegation today in Brussels.

This is our first meeting in my capacity as President of the European Council.

Switzerland and the European Union are very close partners; our economies are closely interlinked. Switzerland is among the major trading and investment partners; Switzerland is even closer to the EU since it joined Schengen last year.

We cover a lot of ground today. We examined the state of our bilateral relations. More specifically, we have discussed the perspectives for Switzerland's European integration policy. We have examined the functioning of our relations based on a set of bilateral agreements (more than 120) that unite us. I've expressed the President the importance for these agreements to work well and to be implemented by both sides properly.

We have also discussed how to improve our relations for the future. The EU is convinced on the need to develop the relations with Switzerland on sound legal and political foundations. The EU Council Conclusions of December 2008 laid down the criteria and conditions which must be fulfilled by future negotiations allowing the participation of Switzerland in our internal market and policies.

Such criteria and conditions refer in particular to the acceptance of the evolution of the *acquis* and its homogeneous interpretation and application.

I know that an important political debate in this regard is taking place in Switzerland, as well as in EU. I've expressed the EU readiness to explore jointly possible solutions to address these questions.

The state of the economy was an other important part of our discussion. I have illustrated the EU response to the monetary crisis and the work in progress to strengthen the EU economic governance.

P R E S S

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I have also illustrated the EU participation in the G20 Toronto Summit and the work in preparation for the next Summit in Seoul in November.

Switzerland, finally, is a key and close partner of the EU. We share not only borders, but more than that also values.

EU and Switzerland have strong and stable relations in a changing world.

Thanks for the visit and for our very fruitful discussion.
