



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

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President of the European Commission

**Statement by President Barroso at the joint press conference on the review of the Danish Presidency**

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Joint press conference with Mr Schulz, EP President, and Ms Thorning-Schmidt, Danish Prime Minister/Strasbourg  
**3 July 2012**

Let me wholeheartedly thank Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt and her team for a very committed and dynamic Danish Presidency and for the good cooperation over the last 6 months.

The Presidency was what I can call a bridge over troubled waters in these very challenging times. It was also a compass to help steer Europe out of the crisis and build new foundations for growth and jobs.

I am not going to make a speech; you have heard it already twice so I will not repeat. Let me just highlight the points I felt as more important in the Danish Presidency, and once again thank Helle Thorning-Schmidt for her commitment.

The commitment to growth and competitiveness, this is important. We have now a compact for growth so we will have to make clear that stability is important but growth should accompany stability. But growth not just fuelled by investment, investment is of course indispensable and we are happy that many of our proposals are adopted, but also through structural reforms for competitiveness.

And this is the point we need in Europe now instead of polarising the debate and trying to put those in favour of growth on one side against those in favour of stability on the other. We need both stability and growth. Some are more keen on public investment but others are insisting on the need for structural reforms for competitiveness. We need both. We need structural reforms to become more competitive, also to reduce imbalances in Europe.

And the Danish Presidency from that point of view was indeed very helpful because it was, and I am proud of the work also of the Commission, together with the Commission we were putting high on the agenda the new European Semester, the need for the Member States to be serious on the way they are making this collective exercise of improving their competitiveness with structural reforms.

This was one of the most important points, probably not the most spectacular, but I can tell you, because I can make the difference between what happened this year and previous years of the work of the Danish Presidency giving credibility to this exercise. It was the first time we have this exercise after we had the so-called six pack. It was important.

The second point I would like to highlight, and that would be my last one, was of course the traditional commitment of Denmark to green growth, and also the personal commitment of the Prime Minister. We have this energy efficiency directive - you know that we in the Commission believe it is not ambitious enough. We know that this is so because some Member States were not able to follow the more ambitious position of Denmark. Nevertheless the Energy Efficiency Directive is an important step in the right direction. It is another building stone in our Europe 2020 agenda for sustainable growth. I would like also to thank Denmark for this contribution for the green growth agenda. We were together in the Rio+20 conference.

So, I think Denmark can be proud of the way its government has exercised this Presidency of the Council, but of course at the same time we have to be absolutely honest - it is not going to be the end of our challenges. We have a lot of work to do and it is in this spirit that I hope that the new Presidency of the Council, the Cypriot Presidency, will take this work in good cooperation with the other institutions, the Parliament and the Commission, and achieves important results for all of us.

I thank you for your attention.