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CLAUDIO MARTINI MEETS COMMISSIONER HAHN TO DEFEND AN AMBITIOUS COHESION POLICY

"The CPMR is an important ally for us in this process towards the negotiation of a strong and effective European cohesion policy", expressed **Johannes Hahn**, European Commissioner in charge of regional policy, in a meeting held yesterday in Brussels with **Claudio Martini**, President of Tuscany and President of the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR) and **Eleni Marianou**, Secretary General of the CPMR.

The aim of the meeting, initiated by the CPMR, was to establish a close relationship with the new Commissioner and to jointly lay the foundations of an action plan to increasingly promote the vital role of the European regions in the implementation of the European project. *"Cohesion policy remains the only way which enables a development policy that Europe needs in order to emerge from the economic and social crisis. Moreover, it relies on unique multi-level governance for the implementation of the broad objectives laid out in the Commission's EU2020 document,"* underlined Claudio Martini during the meeting.

"We are not in agreement with those who declare that cohesion policy should be intended for only part of Europe," he also recalled, *"and we are opposed to any hypothesis which would stipulate the European Social Funds be excluded from cohesion policy."*

The Commissioner in charge of regional policy reassured the CPMR by stressing that the document on the "EU2020 strategy", which has just been published by the Commission, refers to the regions on several points and particularly on their role in the implementation of regional policy.

Johannes Hahn also gave his availability to participate in the next CPMR General Assembly in Aberdeen (UK) on 29 and 30 September 2010, which will discuss the CPMR's final position with regards to cohesion policy after 2014. *"The timing of your General Assembly is excellent",* indicated the Commissioner, *"as it is just before the presentation of the 5th Cohesion Report by the Commission."*

Claudio Martini was satisfied with the meeting, but he called on the 161 member regions of the CPMR to be vigilant. *"We are in a phase which compels us to no longer accept declarations, and we ask President Barroso for a strong and genuine commitment to the development of an ambitious cohesion policy."*

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Photos of the meeting are available on the [European Commission website](http://www.europeancommission.eu)