



THE PRIME MINISTER

Oslo, 19 March 2010

Dear Mr Van Rompuy,

I welcome the new European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. With reference to the up-coming meeting in the European Council 25 – 26 March, I would like to express some Norwegian views on the strategy.

The Europe 2020 strategy is a timely response to the severe economic crisis we are experiencing both in Europe and in the rest of the world. Norway has undertaken, both through our membership of the European Economic Area and the internal market, and through our close cooperation and ties with the EU in many other areas, to participate in efforts to create a strong and sustainable economic base for the future.

Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth requires that we find the right balance between open markets, efficient competition and smart regulation. We welcome a re-launch of the internal market, as set forth in the Europe 2020 strategy. An efficient internal market, based on a level playing field and well functioning financial markets, is a precondition for a successful new strategy for Europe.

The policies we design for the next decade must facilitate a smooth recovery from the economic crisis while at the same time safeguarding sustainable development. We must remain committed to open markets, both within Europe and beyond. We should project our values and promote strong labour, environmental and safety standards around the globe.

Europe must develop climate-friendly technologies that enable us to combine growth with lower emissions. We have learned that one of the keys to developing a smarter, greener economy is the introduction of environmental taxes and tradable emission allowances.

HE Mr Herman Van Rompuy  
President of the European Council  
European Council  
Brussels  
Belgium

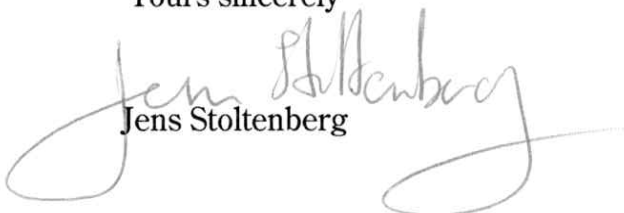
If Europe succeeds in reducing emissions from power stations and industrial plants through carbon capture and by other means, we can make a real contribution to efforts to counter global climate change. Combating climate change and developing cleaner energy would boost innovative business and employment opportunities in Europe.

The answer to many of the challenges ahead lies in knowledge, skills and labour. Europe needs to enhance its performance in employment, innovation, research and education. I believe that a flexible European labour market with lifelong learning and appropriate social protection is decisive for a stable workforce and inclusive European growth. Affordable child care services and measures to combine work and family life for both women and men are important means of promoting women's employment. Universities should contribute even more to productive knowledge and growth.

Norway participates in many EU programmes on research, education and innovation, where ideas for a sound future for Europe are currently being developed. Norway is prepared, through our close ties and broad cooperation with the EU, to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy.

A copy of this letter will be forwarded to the President of the European Commission, Mr José Manuel Barroso, and Prime Minister Mr José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Yours sincerely



Jens Stoltenberg