

From The Guardian, 19 October 2007

As supporters of the Coalition for the Reform Treaty, we encourage successful negotiations on the European treaty currently being negotiated by Gordon Brown and other heads of government (Leaders, October 17).

The measures in the treaty are not only in the EU's interest but in Britain's interests too. They propose various changes which have been made necessary by the policy of enlargement. The EU's membership has almost doubled from 15 members to 27 members since 2004. Enlargement to eastern Europe, while being one of the most spectacular foreign-policy success stories of recent times, has meant that the EU needs to reform its institutions.

Reading some of the coverage of the treaty, one could be forgiven for missing the fact that it actually increases the UK's voting weight in the European Council by 45%, and other institutional changes make it more likely that the UK can accelerate reform in priority areas.

Furthermore, we welcome an agreement because it brings the period of uncertainty about the EU's institutions to an end. It will allow us to look to the future with more confidence so that the EU can stop talking only about institutions and take action in the areas such as climate change, energy security and the competitiveness of Europe in light of the economic rise of China and India.

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Chair, Labour Movement for Europe,

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House of Lords and chair of the all-party group on Europe,

Phil Bennion

Chairman, Liberal Democrat European Group,

Robert Moreland

Deputy chairman, Conservative Group for Europe,

Robert Philpot

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