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## COMMISSIONER WULF-MATHIES TO TAKE PART IN WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON IRELAND

Commissioner Monika Wulf-Mathies will visit Washington this week to represent the European Union at the May 24-26 White House Conference on Trade and Investment in Ireland.

The aim of the conference is to consolidate the process of peace and reconciliation in Northern Ireland by promoting new investment, business partnerships and employment in the province.

Hosted by President Bill Clinton, the White House conference will bring together business and government leaders from Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic (whose border counties were affected economically by the fighting), and senior US executives interested in new opportunities in the region. The conference is being organized by the Business Council for International Understanding.

Commissioner Monika Wulf-Mathies, who is responsible for the EU's regional policy, will address the White House conference on Friday, May 26. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) John Hume and James Nicholson, who represent different communities in Northern Ireland, will also attend the conference.

**At 9 a.m. on Thursday, May 25, Commissioner Wulf-Mathies (possibly joined by MEPs John Hume and James Nicholson) will give a press conference in the press briefing room of the Sheraton Hotel, 2660 Woodley Road NW, Washington DC. Members of the press are invited to attend.**

While in Washington, Commissioner Wulf-Mathies will also meet with Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown, and Representatives Joseph Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Peter King (R-NY).

Like the US, the European Commission has consistently supported moves towards peace in Northern Ireland, most recently through the allocation of a \$400 million package to aid reconciliation and economic growth in the province. As part of the EU's efforts to reduce disparities among its regions, Northern Ireland received over \$1 billion from the EU's structural funds between 1989 and 1993, and will receive another \$1.5 billion between 1994 and 1999. Since 1989, the EU has contributed almost \$20 million a year to the International Fund for Ireland, which was set up in 1986.

### **Monika Wulf-Mathies**

European Commissioner for Regional Policy

Before joining the European Commission in January 1995, Monika Wulf-Mathies served four consecutive terms (starting in 1982 and reelected in 1984, 1988, and 1992) as Chairperson of the German Transport Union ÖTV (Öffentliche Dienste, Transport und Verkehr) which she joined in 1971. A member of the German Social Democratic Party since 1965, she served in various departments in the Federal Chancellery from 1971 to 1976, and was also Head of Division in the Federal Ministry of Economics (1968-1971). She holds a number of other honorary positions including President of Public Service International, and Deputy Chair of the Supervisory Board of Deutsche Lufthansa. She received her doctorate from the University of Hamburg in 1968 and studied history, German and economics at the Universities of Freiburg and Hamburg (1961-1968).

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