

## **HUDGHTON TELLS FINNIE TO ROLL UP HIS SLEEVES**

Ian Hudghton MEP, SNP Member of the European Parliament says an EU report highlighting the importance of regional and local authorities in Europe couldn't be more timely. The Napolitano Report, debated in plenary session at the Parliament in Strasbourg today, reasserts the right of ministers from regional governments to participate in Council of Ministers delegations, with the proviso that it be "in accordance with that State's constitutional distribution of powers." (Napolitano Report A5-0427/2002 page 6, paragraph J, quoting from Article 203 of the EC Treaty)

Coming as it does in the week when the Scots fishing industry faces the biggest crisis in its history, this section of the report has not been lost on Fisheries Committee member, Mr Hudghton. Speaking from his office in Strasbourg he said:

"The reassertion of this power gives Ross Finnie the green light to get stuck right into the fishing talks this week. The text is suitably flexible saying that ministers from regional governments can "participate" in delegations. If I were Mr Finnie, I'd interpret that in its widest sense, get my sleeves rolled up and really fight for our Scottish fishing community. I'm sure that Scots who are anxious to protect our fisheries dependent communities expect the Scots minister to be leading on issues directly affecting our country and really fight Scotland's corner. There is simply no excuse for him to take a back seat."

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