

Summer 2009 Report from Claude Moraes MEP

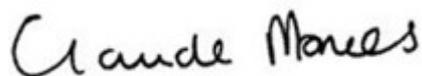
Welcome to my new eNewsletter

Dear Friends,

I was re-elected as your Labour MEP in the June 2009 European elections. This newsletter is an important link with you, to keep you informed about what is happening in the EU, Labour in Europe, and my work on your behalf.

Some of you will be receiving this for the first time. For regular readers you will have seen a break. This has been because of the European elections and the updating of our website and newsletter, so that our communications with you are clearer and more accountable. It also follows your responses to our questionnaire on how you would like to receive information from your Labour MEPs.

Please let me know what you think about the new reports. If you would like to unsubscribe at any time please visit the [eNewsletter](#) section on the homepage of my website or my contact my office. Your email address will not be passed onto anyone, and we are registered under the Data Protection Act. For more details please visit our [Privacy Policy](#) on the website.



Claude Moraes
Labour Member of European Parliament for London

News

European Elections 2009

The European elections took place on 4 June 2009. I headed the London Labour list, and I was re-elected as one of your Labour MEPs representing the seventy three parliamentary constituencies in London.

Since 1999, MEPs represent you on a regional basis and following the June elections there are two Labour MEPs representing the whole of London. I want to thank all of those who volunteered their time to help in re-electing Mary Honeyball and myself to serve as your representatives in the European Parliament for the next five years.

As many of you will know, it was a very difficult night for Labour nationally. There was an unprecedented sequence of events including the MPs expenses scandal, a resignation of a cabinet minister the day before, combined with the fact that this is a secondary election, producing very large protest votes along with many other factors. This produced a very bad result for Labour across the UK. The European Parliamentary Labour Party (EPLP)

lost three sitting MEPs and new Labour MEPs who would, under normal circumstances have expected to join our ranks.

Despite our difficulties nationally, we scored an encouraging success in London where Labour's share of the vote held up, whilst across the country it was falling. In London, we were able to prevent the BNP from gaining an MEP in one of their target areas. This is in no small part down to the excellent organisation, commitment and drive of Labour party members in London who pounded the streets in extremely difficult circumstances. Without this effort from Labour party members the result in London may have reflected national trends, but together we were able to halt the slide and produce a good result, which builds on the strong result in last year's GLA elections. If due to EU enlargement Labour's overall MEP allocation in London had not been cut from nine to eight MEPs for all parties, Labour would have retained all of its existing MEPs in London. The London result was not repeated in all other regions including the North-West and Yorkshire & Humber where the first two BNP MEPs were elected.

For an excellent summary of what happened in London please see a [briefing](#) by Phil Dilks, London Labour Party Press Manager.

Labour party members are a key part of our campaign, but also the organisation of our London regional team was essential to our result. I want to thank Ken Clark, London Labour's Regional Director for all his help and assistance in the campaign. It was a well run European campaign with very restricted resources, in the most difficult national political atmosphere. I want to also thank Sukie Sohal, Louise Magee, Peter May, Rob Chapman, Phil Dilks, Andrew Clark, Terry Paul and George James who were all critical to our result. At head office many colleagues helped in our region including our General Secretary, Ray Collins, the campaign co-ordinator, Harriet Harman MP, Alicia Kennedy, Roy Kennedy, Hilary Perrin and the many volunteers who came to our phone banks and canvassing sessions including our colleagues from Labour Movement for Europe, London Young Labour and LGBT Labour. London region as a result, had a record number of ministerial visits, for a European election campaign including a visit of the Prime Minister to our office in Islington to meet party workers.

We were fortunate in the European election campaign to have an excellent group of candidates who began working hard months before the official campaign started and who put in a tremendous effort. Our candidates were, Anne Fairweather, Kevin McGrath, Cllr Nilgun Canver, Emma Jones, Raj Jethwa and Cllr Abdul Asad.

European Election Round-up – Across Europe

Our Socialist sister parties across Europe overall had a bad European election. Socialists in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and elsewhere all had losses, with voters turning to the centre-right and extreme right in this downturn, despite many centre-right parties being in government.

This produced good results for Sarkozy, Berlusconi and Merkel. There were some good results for Socialists in Greece, Malta and Ireland. But on the whole it was a disappointing night. It means that the European People's Party (EPP) controls all three main bodies of the EU - the Parliament, the Council and the Commission. This means the Socialist & Democrats Group in the parliament will have to work harder to ensure we have a strong social dimension to EU politics over the next five years.

Regrettably, the far-right had a relatively successful night, with gains in the UK, Hungary, Austria, Finland and Greece. But they also had notable losses in France and Poland.

Conservatives leave mainstream centre-right EPP

The new parliament has seen the Conservatives keep their promise to leave the mainstream centre-right group to form a eurosceptic grouping. I, along with many other British politicians of all parties, have been warning that this is a retrograde step that will isolate the UK from key players and decisions in the parliament. The Tories have left the group containing Angela Merkel's CDU, Sarkozy's UMP and other centre-right parties from Italy, Spain, Sweden, Poland and virtually every EU member state. They have now formed a group with the Polish Law & Justice Party who have a questionable record on LGBT rights and equality, the Czech ODS whose President is a climate change denier and a Lithuanian MEP who has praised the Waffen SS. Some of David Cameron's own MEPs have strongly questioned this move, as have EPP prime ministers and Presidents. The split is largely ideological and in the interests of a narrow British Conservative interest. This leaves the UK Tories more isolated than ever and even further from the European mainstream.

New Name for Party of European Socialists

The Party of European Socialists has been renamed the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in Europe (S&D) in the European Parliament. This is to reflect the fact that we have been joined by our Italian sister party, the Progressive Democrats. In the new group, I was elected as spokesperson for Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs. **If you would like more information please contact my office.**

New Commission President

After the strong showing for the centre-right in the European elections, it became inevitable that Jose Manuel Barroso would be elected the new Commission President for a second term. The European Parliament now has the power to elect or reject Presidency candidates. I abstained from the vote on Barroso, firstly because, along with my Labour colleagues, I believed we should have a new candidate in the interests of democracy, and more importantly on close questioning from the Socialists & Democrat group, Barroso didn't give the needed policy guarantees on a range of issues including climate change, international development, the Posted Workers Directive, and his overall vision for a social Europe.

Member states were particularly keen to get an early decision on this appointment and were applying pressure on Parliament to approve his nomination before the summer recess. Parliament resisted the pressure for a summer vote and voted in September to re-elect Barroso with the Socialist & Democrats securing a commitment to 'revisit' the damaging Posted Workers Directive. This Directive resulted in protests across the UK from energy workers who have been unable to apply for jobs at their own sites due to the importation of foreign contractors. This will be an important piece of legislation for UK & EU workers and one which will now have backing of the European Commission.

Labour Party News

Election of Leader, Deputy-Leader and Chair of EPLP

At our first AGM since the elections, our current leader, Glenis Willmott MEP was re-elected for the parliamentary term. Glenis has led us in the past year and worked to secure maximum British Labour representation on key committees and other groupings in the parliament.

I was elected as Deputy Leader of the EPLP. Richard Howitt MEP was re-elected Chair and Brian Simpson MEP, who also Chairs the parliament's Transport Committee was elected Whip.

In the new Socialists & Democrats group, UK Labour MEPs have been elected to senior positions including Stephen Hughes as the Senior Vice-President of the Group. I was elected as the Groups, Spokesperson and Committee co-ordinator on Civil Liberties, Justice & Home Affairs which includes migration, citizen's freedoms, anti-discrimination legislation, cross border justice, policing and anti-terrorism. At this stage I am also Labour spokesperson on Employment & Social Affairs and a member of the Internal Market & Consumer Protection Committee in this new mandate.

Visits & Meetings

The European Parliament was in recess during the election period. During the campaign, I travelled across London for campaign stops, meetings and events. I am grateful to all of you who attended those meetings. Below is a cross section of those events and meetings over the election period and also a round up of my visits & meetings since July.

For new readers I list a cross-section of the meetings I attend, to establish accountability. This is only a cross-section to give you an idea of my monthly work.

Election Meetings in May

07 May – Report Back, Barking CLP
08 May – Meeting with Steve Reed, Leader of Lambeth Council
08 May – Speaker at Festival of Europe Debate with the other party's candidates, LSE
09 May – Campaigning with Islington North with Jeremy Corbyn MP
09 May – Poplar & Limehouse Campaigning with Jim Fitzpatrick MP
10 May – Speaker at Sister Parties European election event with Foreign Secretary, David Miliband MP
11 May – Campaigning with Jan Royall in Ilford South, Newham
12 May – Bexleyheath & Crayford and Greenwich campaigning
12 May – Canvassing with European sister parties
13 May – Finchley & Golders Green, Hampstead & Kilburn with Glenda Jackson MP and Westminster North campaigning
14 May – Finchley, Hendon and Enfield North Campaigning
15 May – Hackney and Bethnal Green & Bow campaigning with Douglas Alexander & Rushanara Ali PPC
17 May – Hendon CLP Fundraiser
18 May – Brent Campaigning with Dawn Butler MP
19 May – Brentford & Isleworth and Ealing campaigning
19 May – Campaigning with LGBT Labour in Soho
20 May – Haringey, Holborn and Islington North campaigning
21 May – Election launch with London's Bangladeshi community, Kilburn
21 May – Speaker at Conference on EU Migration and homelessness in London with Homeless Link
22 May – Campaigning with London's Portuguese community and Foreign Secretary, David Miliband MP in Lambeth
22 May – Visit to Camden Irish Community Centre
23 May – Campaigning with local members in Barking
23 May – Speaker at Roundtable discussion on Social Europe, Euston
24 May – Campaigning in Ealing with Virendra Sharma MP and Islington South with Emily Thornberry MP
25 May – Eltham with Clive Efford MP and in Newham with Stephen Timms MP and Mayor Robin Wales campaigning and canvassing
26 May – Canvassing with London Young Labour in Bloomsbury
27 May – Wimbledon, Ealing Southall with Virendra Sharma MP and Finchley & Golders Green campaigning
28 May – Tooting and Lewisham campaigning.
28 May – Speaker at Newham Fabians.
30 May – Campaigning with Labour BME bus in Hackney with Dianne Abbott MP and Jenette Arnold AM and Mayor Jules Pipe.

In the final days of the election, I campaigned in nine London boroughs across London including areas not detailed above.

Visits & Meetings in June, July, August

17 Jun – Launch of new Tribune magazine, London
22 Jun – Trade Unionists for Labour meeting, London

23-24 Jun – Political Group Meetings, EPLP & S&D, Brussels
01 Jul – Political Group Meetings, EPLP & S&D, Brussels
03 Jul – Lexington Communications Conference on new EU legislation, London
04 Jul – St John’s Summer Fete, London
08 Jul – Political Group Meetings, EPLP, Brussels
10 Jul – TUC Network Europe meeting, London
10 Jul – NHS Visit with Alan Johnson MP, Virendra Sharma MP, Southall
11 Jul – Progressive London Conference
12-16 Jul – Plenary Voting Session, Strasbourg
13-14 Jul – Political Group Meetings, EPLP & S&D, Strasbourg
16 Jul – Employment & Social Affairs Cmte and Justice & Home Affairs Cmte, Strasbourg
18 Jul – SERTUC Regional Council, London
22 Jul – Employment & Home Affairs and Justice & Home Affairs Cmtes, Brussels
27 Jul – 01 Sep – European Parliament Summer Recess
29 Jul – V K Krishna Menon Institute Award, London
01 Sep – Political Group Meetings, EPLP, Brussels
02 Sep – Meeting with Boris Johnson on the proposed Hedge Fund Directive
02-03 Sep – Employment & Social Affairs and Justice & Home Affairs Cmte, Brussels
04 Sep – Open Europe debate on Alternative Investment Directive, London
07 Sep – London Regional Board
08 Sep – Political Group Meetings, EPLP and S&D, Brussels
09 Sep – Launch of Museum of Migration Working Group, London
10 Sep – Meeting with activists in Walthamstow CLP
14 Sep – Meeting with London trade unionists
15 Sep – Meeting with Martin Schulz MEP, Leader of the Socialist and Democrats Group
15-16 – Political Group Meetings, EPLP, Brussels
15 Sep – Employment & Social Affairs and Justice & Home Affairs Cmtes.