

## **11/15/2006 International Business Wales: Wales leads European Regional Governments debate**

The First Minister for Wales Rhodri Morgan will preside over a major gathering of senior European regional government leaders meeting in Cardiff on 16/17 November. The Welsh Assembly Government is host of the 7th Presidential Conference of European Regions With Legislative Powers (REGLEG).

The First Minister said, "This is the most important gathering of European regional political leaders ever to take place on Welsh soil. Wales having the Presidency of REGLEG is an indication of how far and how fast we have established Wales' credentials in Europe in the relatively short time since devolution began in 1999. In succession to Bavaria, last year's president, we have taken forward the debate on regional issues at a critical and uncertain time for the EU. There are likely to be significant developments in the debate about Europe's future during the next twelve months and it's vitally important that Europe's legislative regions influence progress. The European Union cannot function purely at the level of Member State governments – that view is 15 years out of date. The Europe of today and tomorrow depends for its success on engagement below the level of the Member State; legislative regions have a central role to play and we must ensure we are in position to play it effectively."