

# Salmond stresses EU credentials



Alex Salmond will stress Scotland's European credentials in a speech in Bruges

27 April 2014

Scotland's natural resources make it one of the "lynchpins" of the European Union, according to the First Minister.

Alex Salmond will say Scotland is at the very heart of the EU as he delivers a keynote speech in Belgium tomorrow.

He is expected to tell those gathered at the College of Europe in Bruges that Scotland has a key role to play when it comes to energy security within Europe.

Mr Salmond will say: "Scotland's vast natural resources and human talent make it one of the lynchpins of the European Union.

"Our huge energy reserves, our economic and financial contribution, our fishing grounds, our academic, cultural and social links, and our commitment to the founding values of the European ideal place us at the very heart of the EU.

"One of the great issues facing Europe is the question of energy security. In this area Scotland is blessed. We have a key role to play in providing energy security for Europe, and in developing the low carbon technologies the world will need for the future."

He will also say: "Scotland has fully 25% of Europe's offshore wind and tidal potential. We have 10% of the EU's wave potential. We have 60% of the EU's oil reserves. But our importance to the European Union stretches further.

"As one of the wealthiest countries, Scotland is a net financial contributor to the EU and will remain so as an independent member. We have more top universities, per head, than any other member of the EU and our academics collaborate with partners across Europe.

"We have one of the largest national shares of Europe's total fishing grounds and 12 national fleets fish in our waters. The EU's fisheries policy would unravel without Scotland."

Dr Ian Duncan of the Scottish Conservatives said: "Alex Salmond sees the issue of EU membership in Scottish terms, but fails to appreciate the view from across Europe.

"For some countries it will be a question of how they will benefit from any future negotiations.

"For all Mr Salmond asserts that Scotland is the lynchpin on Europe, there are many member states nervous about the threat of their own separatist movements, whether Spain, Belgium, Italy.

"They see developments in Scotland as an incitement to greater instability at home. The only thing that is clear at the moment is that a vote for separation in September is a vote for uncertainty, doubt and erosion of all that Scotland holds as a constituent member of the UK."

The College of Europe was the world's first university institute of postgraduate studies and training in European affairs.



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