

# LKAB - an international high-tech minerals group

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## President Lars-Eric Aaro addressed European Parliament

On Tuesday 15 March, President and CEO, Lars-Eric Aaro, spoke before the European Parliament in Brussels concerning raw materials from the Barents Region.

Carl Bildt, Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, hosted the conference, since Sweden is currently chairing the Barents Euro-Arctic Council (BEAC). The purpose of the conference was to highlight the Barents Region's enormous potential as a source of raw materials for Europe.



LKAB was the only industry representative. Also in attendance was Swedish Minister for Enterprise and Energy, Maud Olofsson, as were Antonio Tajani, Commissioner for Industry, Russia's Ambassador to the EU Vladimir Chizhov, Director General of the Geological Survey of Finland, Elias Ekdahl, Member of the European Parliament, Lena Ek, and the secretaries of state for Norway and Finland.

During the ensuing discussion, Lars-Eric Aaro remarked:

*There is a window of opportunity for raw materials in the Barents Region, and it's wide open, but it will not be open for ever.*

- *We have the most comprehensive environmental legislation in place.*
- *We have the market, the customers.*
- *We have the skills and technology.*
- *We have the investors.*
- *We have the entrepreneurs.*

**BUT**

- *We need to improve and expand the infrastructure.*
- *We need to improve the application process for environmental permits.*

- It is an enormous success for the mining industry in Sweden and the Barents Region to be able to align our business opportunities with EU strategic activities, so as to reduce the import of raw materials to Europe, says Lars-Eric Aaro. It is also the result of many years of work in Sweden and the EU towards a greater focus on the importance of natural resources for Europe.

- The Barents Euro-Arctic Council will convene in Kiruna, in October 2011, when the Council will be chaired by Norway. Items on the agenda will include Europe's raw-materials strategy as well as how the EU can contribute to infrastructural investments, including the Ore Railway (Malmbanan) in Sweden and its Norwegian counterpart, Ofotbanen. Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carl Bildt, has invited all foreign ministers in the Barents Region to attend the meeting.

For more information, see [euractive.com](http://euractive.com)