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JOINT STATEMENT by

UNICE - KEIDANREN

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**UNICE AND KEIDANREN JOIN FORCES
FOR FORTHCOMING WTO ROUND**

Today, UNICE (Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe) and KEIDANREN (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) met under the co-chairmanship of Baron Jacobs, President of UNICE, and Mr Takashi Imai, Chairman of KEIDANREN. This meeting continues the long tradition of dialogue and co-operation between the two organisations. Mr Jacobs and Mr Imai called for a strengthening of these relations and encouraged their teams to work even more closely on matters of common interest.

In the same spirit, they welcomed establishment of the new EU-Japan Business Dialogue Round Table whose first meeting took place in Brussels on 7-8 October 1999. They believe that intensive efforts should be made to deepen mutual understanding and to discuss matters of mutual business interest with the object of making joint recommendations to the authorities on both sides.

UNICE and KEIDANREN assessed recent political, institutional, administrative and economic developments on both sides and their implications for business.

UNICE and KEIDANREN will continue to work closely with their respective administrations to create a global environment favourable to business development. They stressed that entrepreneurs are agents of change, they create new sources of wealth and new jobs. Consequently, they called on their respective governments to improve the framework conditions for promoting innovation and more dynamic entrepreneurship.

A few weeks before the WTO Ministerial Conference which is to take place in Seattle, KEIDANREN and UNICE also reviewed the latest and expected developments which will influence the outcome of the Conference. Mr Imai and Mr Jacobs expressed their concerns regarding the

strong anti-WTO campaign being mounted by various interest groups. They both reiterated their support for the launch in Seattle of a new global round of multilateral trade negotiations. UNICE and KEIDANREN believe that it is the best and most forward-looking approach to maximising realisation of the shared objectives of all citizens in terms of employment, living and working conditions, health and safety and sustainable development. Consequently, they are determined to see WTO succeed in its vital mission which is to ensure that international trade is fair and as free from restrictions as possible.

The new round of negotiations should be comprehensive in scope, covering a large number of issues including notably the built-in agenda (agriculture and services); provisions for treatment of foreign direct investment; reduction of the tariffs on manufactured goods, reduction/elimination of non-tariff barriers, reduction of barriers to electronic commerce; trade facilitation; liberalisation and increased transparency of government procurement markets for goods and services; clarification of the relationship between trade and environment; increased rationality and transparency of trade defence instruments such as Anti-Dumping Agreement. Regarding Intellectual Property, UNICE's and KEIDANREN's priority is full implementation of the TRIPs agreement. The negotiations should not exceed three years and be concluded by a single undertaking, namely that all WTO members should accept and implement the results of the negotiations. UNICE and KEIDANREN will co-operate with that aim in view.

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