



Brussels, 7 December 1999

**UNICE REACTS ON WTO SEATTLE DEADLOCK:
"NO RESULT BETTER THAN BAD RESULT"**

UNICE - the voice of business in Europe - which actively promoted the launch in Seattle of a comprehensive round of negotiations, is **very disappointed by the outcome of the WTO Ministerial Conference** which ended, on 3 December, with suspension of the proceedings.

"No result is better than a bad result." said Baron Georges Jacobs, UNICE President. UNICE priorities for the new round regarding notably investment, services, trade facilitation, market access, government procurement and trade and environment were hardly discussed. Unless these issues - together with the other challenges globalisation is raising - are adequately addressed and covered in a new round, **a limited package is not worth it for European business.**

"Moreover," President Jacobs said, "only a balanced package, taking into account the legitimate interests expressed in Seattle by developing countries and civil society representatives, would gain the political support necessary to launch the round. It is evident that the environment in Seattle was not appropriate for the necessary compromises and the process inadequate to combine the transparency and efficiency necessary for **a broad agreement.**"

UNICE particularly appreciated the leadership role played by Commissioner Lamy to build bridges between the diverging views of WTO members and to ensure the widest transparency of the process by involving representatives of civil society in the Commission delegation. This dialogue should be actively pursued. It is the only way to avoid misunderstanding and secure public opinion's strong support for a strengthening of the multilateral trading system and pursuit of the liberalisation process.

Despite the protests in the street, all WTO Members, developed and developing countries together, have reaffirmed in Seattle their strong commitment to the system and their determination to make it work to the benefit of all. UNICE will actively support initiatives in this direction. It will also learn the lessons from the Seattle Conference and adjust its action to pursue its objective of the launch of a broad new round of negotiations as soon as possible. UNICE is confident that the WTO will emerge strengthened from the Seattle crisis.

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