



FEB-VBO
Federation of Belgian Companies

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PRESS RELEASE

EBS: DIALOGUE IS THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND CHANGE

The first **European Business Summit** (EBS), focusing on "Innovation and Creativity", will take place in Brussels on 9-11 June 2000. The EBS will be a forum bringing together European business leaders and decision-makers from the European Commission and European Parliament. The direct dialogue fostered there will produce hard-and-fast recommendations directed at Commission President Prodi, the aim being to help Europe make up for lost time in the new, rapidly evolving digital economy.

"The EBS will constitute a major new step in the post-Lisbon process" says the Federation of Belgian Companies (VBO/FEB), which is organizing the Summit under the auspices of UNICE. In Lisbon the EU Member States agreed to boost employment in Europe by stimulating innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit. The EBS will inject fresh impetus into this dynamic process.

The underlying philosophy of the first European Business Summit is one of partnership and dialogue. The lesson of Lisbon – namely that industry and the European institutions need to join forces – will be put into practice in Brussels.

The more than 800 participants (and the press) will have access to two plenary sessions and 12 workshops on such topics as "*Nurturing innovators through education*", "*E-business, innovation and new markets*" and "*Supporting innovation by protecting intellectual property*". The European Commission will be represented by President Prodi and no fewer than 10 members of the European Commission. Keynote speakers from the business world will include Cor Boonstra, CEO and Chairman of Philips, Jorma Ollila, President and CEO of Nokia, Gerhard Cromme, CEO of ThyssenKrupp, and Wolfgang Berndt, CEO of Procter and Gamble. HRH Prince Philippe of Belgium and Mr Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft, will address the opening session.

The European Business Summit will initiate a process that aims to go further than providing a one-off boost. It is intended to make a long-term contribution towards strengthening Europe's capacity for innovation. For more information consult www.ebsummit.org.

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