

LACK OF EU LEADERSHIP UNDERMINES EURO CONFIDENCE

Dear UNICE@News readers,

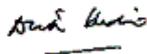
The weakness of the euro is primarily a reflection of political failings in the EU rather than economic fundamentals. The main cause for the weak single currency is in fact the alarming lack of leadership in Europe.

First and foremost, Europe suffers from a lack of essential economic and structural reform. Without this reform, the euro risks remaining undervalued in the longer term. Secondly, there is a gap between the rhetoric at the Lisbon Summit - where many good intentions were presented to tackle Europe's economic lag - and the actual actions taken in the Member States. The EU needs a pioneer group to take the lead in this, but the pioneers are applying the brakes.

Some examples of topics where action is lacking:

- Capital market: no support for pension reform, which is essential for capital market development in the EU;
- Transport: reticent attitude towards liberalisation of rail freight transport;
- Intellectual Property Rights: progress on Community Patent is half blocked;
- Energy: no initiative to lower energy taxes. Energy taxes in EU are five times those in the USA, which is undermining Europe's competitiveness;
- IGC: no decision to apply qualified majority voting to trade negotiations on services, intellectual property and foreign direct investment.

The gap between the talk and the walk is read by the markets as a lack of commitment to real change. We should stop acting as if we are surprised that this weakens the euro. The EU will never be competitive unless the political leaders within the Union begin to make the structural and economic changes needed, and match words with deeds.



Dirk F. Hudig
Secretary General of UNICE

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UNICE INSIDE

UNICE GOES STRASBOURG

For the first time in 21 years, the UNICE family as a whole – including all Brussels-based delegates from member federations – visited the European Parliament during the September plenary session in Strasbourg.

At the opening reception held at the huge blue-and-white UNICE stand, UNICE President Georges Jacobs addressed EP President Nicole Fontaine and more than 100 Members of Parliament, emphasising the need for closer cooperation between the European Parliament and the business community.

Mr Jacobs said that “politics and economics are not separate worlds. On the contrary, the inter-linkage is intensifying every day. New alliances are needed to meet the great challenges facing us, e.g. how Europe can make use of new technologies. Today’s socio-economic debate is less a question between the politics of left and right, but between policies which are right or wrong”, President Jacobs pointed out.



Representing more than 16 million enterprises of which the vast majority are SMEs, UNICE drew the MEPs’ attention to the specific problems and needs of SMEs at a special SME breakfast. Not only UNICE representatives, but also a group of 40 entrepreneurs gave the EP their practical input for a future European enterprise policy (see article below). The delegation of UNICE and its members also had the opportunity to have a very interesting exchange of views with the

Leaders of the four largest Groups in the EP: Mr Poettering of EPP/EDD, Mr Baron Crespo of PES, Mr Cox of ELDR and Ms Hautala of the Greens. The visit concluded with a ‘thematic’ lunch with more than 40 leading MEPs attending, seated at eight different tables. Here the main policy issues of interest to business, e.g. social affairs, environment, legal issues, economic and monetary affairs, transport, research, energy and trade, were discussed.

This successful event in Strasbourg, organised by B-NEP*, proved to be a major step in reinforcing the cooperation between the European Parliament and UNICE that must be followed up on a day-to-day basis.

* B-NEP is the Business Network for the European Parliament. For further information, please contact Mr Wytze Russchen : w.russchen@unice.be

UNICE STRESSES KEY ROLE OF ENTREPRENEURS IN EUROPEAN SOCIETY

A UNICE delegation of European SME entrepreneurs presented major concerns to Mrs Karla Peijs, Mr Rübzig and their colleagues from the SME inter-group of the European Parliament at a special meeting on 5 and 6 September in Strasbourg. The UNICE entrepreneurs asked Mrs Montfort, French Member of the European Parliament and rapporteur on the multi-annual programme for enterprises and entrepreneurship 2001-2005, to pay full attention to the position and main concerns of European SMEs in the discussions on this important policy document next week.

The delegation emphasised entrepreneurs' essential role in the creation of wealth and employment. They called for better promotion of the spirit of enterprise and a better and simpler business environment. Entrepreneurs stressed the importance of avoiding too much emphasis on size, sector or categories of enterprises in the new multi-annual programme. They stressed the risk of splitting the budget for enterprise policy into many small-scale programmes that will not have the expected overall impact. They re-stated UNICE's preference for an enterprise policy focusing on entrepreneurs who are the real creators of value, who aim at growth, employment and who want to gain advantage from the European Single Market.

The UNICE entrepreneurs called for a better understanding of the dynamic forces driving entrepreneurship and allowing people who have ideas to take risks. They mentioned in particular the importance of taking account of the problem of transfer of undertakings which will impact on many existing companies and jobs in Europe in the coming years (25% of the 6 million enterprises to be transferred to the next generation are facing a major risk of disappearance due to regulatory obstacles and taxation).

UNICE STATEMENT TO BIARRITZ SUMMIT

In preparation of the EU Council Summit in Biarritz which took place on 13 and 14 October, UNICE requested the French Presidency to take note of the views of UNICE on the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the IGC and the Community Patent.

The UNICE Statement "Bold objectives require bold decisions" can be downloaded from the web:

[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/709FA558267D6D26C12569760033EBE6/\\$File/Biarritz-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/709FA558267D6D26C12569760033EBE6/$File/Biarritz-e.pdf)

UNICE HONOURED

The Secretariat is particularly honoured by the decorations which His Majesty King Albert II of the Belgians has decided to bestow on two members of its staff. At a modest ceremony on 17 October, President Jacobs presented the medal of *Chevalier de l'Ordre de la Couronne* to Monique Julien and the medal *Croix de Chevalier de l'Ordre de Léopold II* to Jacqueline Collette-Smits.



Mrs Monique Julien



Mrs Jacqueline Collette-Smits

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

OCTOBER 2000 ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

<p>Economic and Financial Affairs Department UNICE Economic Outlook October 2000</p> <p>UNICE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK</p> <p>Summary.....2</p> <p>Introduction.....2</p> <p>Business Climate3</p> <p>Monetary and Financial Outlook4</p> <p>Taxation, Regulation and Budgetary Issues6</p> <p>Labour Markets and Wage Indicators.....8</p> <p>“New Economy” Issues.....9</p> <p>Main Risks9</p> <p>Annex: Country Results</p>	<p>There is an overall positive picture of the EU economy, although signs are emerging of a trend break in business confidence. Member federations report weakening expectations of profitability growth, attributable to a combination of rising commodity prices and increased regulatory burden. Monetary policy is assessed as broadly appropriate despite concerns over the weakness of the euro, and inflationary risks feeding through from high oil and import prices. The employment situation continues to improve, with tightening and skills shortage in certain labour markets potentially influencing wage demands. Potential benefits from the “new economy” are dependent on framework policy conditions, and governments need to implement credible and determined structural and budgetary reform.</p> <p>To view the document, please visit: http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/4C761FBD25A853ABC125697A003825FE/\$File/EconOut10-00.pdf</p>
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EMU: STATISTICS

A joint meeting of the EMU and Community Statistics working groups on 28 September welcomed three visitors from the statistics directorate of the European Central Bank, for a presentation and discussion of the statistical requirements for EMU. The EMU group continued in the afternoon, to discuss the October Economic Outlook, which was released on Monday 16 October. The general message of the Outlook is that the business climate is improving although cautions against complacency by economic policy-makers.

For further information, please contact ecofin@unice.be

COMPETITIVENESS

UNICE’s Competitiveness working group met on 7 September to discuss indicators for the 2001 new economy benchmarking report, and will discuss the first draft of the text at its meetings on 19 October and on 14 November.

For further information, please contact ecofin@unice.be

REGIONAL POLICY

The Regional Policy working group met on 13 October with two guests, Mr Jean-Marie Seyler of DG Regio, European Commission, to talk about ISPA, and Mr Clause of the European Investment Bank.

For further information, please contact ecofin@unice.be

FISCAL AFFAIRS: VAT STRATEGY

The Fiscal Affairs group met on 26 September, and approved a response to the Commission's communication on its new strategy for VAT released in June. A response to the Commission's proposals for VAT on the delivery of electronic services is in preparation.

For further information, please contact ecofin@unice.be

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ~~EMU~~ EMU: Next meeting 26 January
- ~~Fiscal Affairs~~ Fiscal Affairs: Next meeting 28 November 2000
- ~~VAT~~ VAT: Next meeting 22 November 2000
- ~~Competitiveness~~ Competitiveness: Next meeting 14 November 2000

COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

E-COMMERCE JURISDICTION

In its opinion dated 21 September 2000 concerning the draft Brussels Regulation, the EP supports new forms of governance through alternative or extra-judicial dispute resolutions (ADRs/EDRs). Unfortunately, the EP contradicts this approach through mandatory and potentially bureaucratic accreditation procedures as under consideration by the European Commission.

UNICE expresses sympathy for the opinion by the Parliament concerning support for new forms of co-operative governance through ADRs or EDRs. This is the avenue to be followed by a modern governance approach in the information society, new economy and beyond.

The large majority of e-commerce industry and trade across Europe supports efforts made to include in the final wording of the Brussels Regulation (as to be voted by the Internal Market Council of Ministers, probably on 30 November) a legally acceptable disclaimer clause permitting parties to an on-line contract to refer disputes to ADRs/EDRs of their choice not recognised or accredited other than by market-based solutions.

However, on-line traders express substantial concern against Parliament's opinion that these ADRs or EDRs would have to be recognised under possible accreditation schemes not jointly developed by e-commerce stakeholders themselves, but imposed on them by third parties, the European Commission, governments or others.

UNICE is of the considered opinion, that a modern governance approach of co-regulation and tri-partite cooperation between government, business and consumers makes it mandatory that any ADR/EDR recognition or accreditation schemes (if other than market-based) are jointly developed and agreed upon by parties concerned and not decided upon against the expressed interest of e-commerce stakeholders involved.

In view of the Council decision on the draft Brussels Regulation, UNICE urges Governments not to overlook or at least underestimate the negative ramifications of potentially bureaucratic accreditation schemes for the development of electronic commerce in Europe and the resultant damaging effects on economic growth and employment.

To obtain the full text, please visit:

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/84186A5E24B66EB1C12568190052CDA1/\\$File/Bruxromh.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/84186A5E24B66EB1C12568190052CDA1/$File/Bruxromh.pdf)

LEGAL AFFAIRS

POSITION PAPER: LIABILITY ISSUES

Precautionary principle

UNICE has issued a statement on the precautionary principle following the Commission Communication on the principle. UNICE welcomes the Commission's efforts to provide guidance for application of the precautionary principle and hopes that it will contribute to consistent and harmonised application of the precautionary approach across the EU and preservation of the integrity of the internal market. UNICE warns that arbitrary application of the principle will hinder innovation, stifle economic growth and create unnecessary obstacles to the free movement of goods in the internal market and international trade. Recourse to the principle should remain the exception; the principle should be applied only when there is a sufficient likelihood that serious or irreversible damage might occur to the environment, human, animal or plant health which cannot reasonably be avoided or mitigated by applying less stringent measures.

To view the full text of the communication, please visit:

[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/FA01930B71ECEAF8C125696F00306D4E/\\$File/Precaution.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/FA01930B71ECEAF8C125696F00306D4E/$File/Precaution.pdf)

GENERAL PRODUCT SAFETY DIRECTIVE

UNICE has recently adopted its position paper on the European Commission's proposal for a Directive on general product safety.

The position paper emphasises as a general point that the proposed revision of the Directive would probably entail important conflicts with the existing sectoral/vertical legislation and the subsequent problems of ambiguity and lack of clarity.

Among the number of questions indicated in the mentioned paper, UNICE stresses its opposition to inclusion in the definition of products other than those which are specifically intended for use by individual consumers.

UNICE also disagrees with the Commission proposal on mandatory recall. Instead of the regime proposed by the Commission, UNICE proposes that EU-level support be organised for good practice guidance on product recall.

UNICE will follow closely the debate at both Council and European Parliament level.

To read UNICE's position paper, please visit UNICE's website:

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/11FF126EEF164337C12569670044CA2E/\\$File/prodsafe.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/11FF126EEF164337C12569670044CA2E/$File/prodsafe.pdf)

COMMUNITY PATENT

UNICE welcomed the Commission proposal for creation of a Community patent. Although UNICE is preparing detailed comments on the proposed regulation, it believed it important to support the Commission's ambitious general approach, notably as regards translations and jurisdictional arrangements. UNICE is particularly sensitive to the need to create a specialised jurisdiction to deal with intellectual property issues. It hopes that rapid progress will be made on this subject and, above all, that the general direction proposed by the European Commission is not brought into question.

The text of UNICE's general message can be consulted on its Internet site:

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/57734ED6DDAD6021C1256960004B947B/\\$File/PAT_COM.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/57734ED6DDAD6021C1256960004B947B/$File/PAT_COM.pdf)

VISIT OF A DELEGATION TO MUNICH ON 25 SEPTEMBER

A UNICE delegation has met the President of the European Patent Office. This visit formed part of the framework of close contacts between the UNICE Secretariat and the Secretariat of the European Patent Office. The main themes discussed at this meeting were revision of the European Patent Convention, signature of a protocol designed to streamline translation requirements substantially, and thereby reduce the cost of the European patent, and the possibilities for improving the jurisdictional system for patent cases in Europe.

Enlargement of the European Patent Organisation to include the many countries of central and eastern Europe was discussed, as were the most recent developments in the area of software patentability.

PUBLIC PROCUREMENT

The "Public Procurement" Working Group is developing UNICE comments on the proposed directives COM (2000) 275 and COM (2000) 276 on revision of procedures for award of public contracts (supplies, services, works, water, energy, transport). There was a meeting on 10 October 2000 with Mr Zappala, EP rapporteur on this subject.

For additional information, please contact: d.cloquet@unice.be

WORK IN PROGRESS

New EU financial reporting strategy

In June the European Commission adopted a communication entitled "EU financial reporting strategy: the way forward". This strategy is a key element for establishment of an integrated financial services market and the Lisbon summit underlined the importance of comparability of financial information for creation of an efficient, deep and liquid securities market in Europe. The European Commission believes that realisation of these objectives requires adoption of international accounting standards (IAS) and it has announced that by the end of the year it will present legislative proposals designed to oblige all quoted European companies to draw up their consolidated accounts in accordance with IAS. UNICE's "Accounting Harmonisation" Group is examining these questions, and notably the question of the compatibility of IAS with Community law.

The full text of the Commission communication is available on the site of DG Internal Market:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/internal_market/en/company/account/news/com359fr.pdf

Competition Policy Reform

UNICE's task force on 'Decentralised Application of EC Competition Law', is preparing comments on the recently adopted proposal for a council regulation on the implementation of the rules on competition. In a letter to the Commission, UNICE warned that a new clause granting the Commission discretionary power to require undertakings by regulation to register commercial agreements at a level of detail to be defined by the Commission and to set penalties for non-compliance, would mean a substantial increase in bureaucratic burdens on business and might seriously affect UNICE's earlier position on the White Paper proposals.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS

SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAMME

UNICE has taken a stance on the draft social action programme presented by the Commission on 28 June and to be adopted at the December Nice Council. Europe's competitiveness requires efficient labour markets. Therefore, the new social policy agenda should ensure that social policy acts as a productive factor in order to achieve the new strategic objectives set by the Lisbon European Summit. UNICE takes the view that the new social policy agenda should not seek to harmonise social policies but rather work towards common objectives by applying the open co-ordination method defined by the Lisbon European Summit. European employers are also determined to live up to their responsibilities as social partners when they see an added value in doing so. However, if the social dialogue process is to be successful, it is essential to avoid public interference in the areas of competence of social partners.

To view the position, please visit :

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/D9EA3DF9503E7468C12569060049A65C/\\$File/Socpol-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/D9EA3DF9503E7468C12569060049A65C/$File/Socpol-e.pdf)

EMPLOYMENT PACKAGE

The Commission presented its employment package on 6 September. In its position paper, UNICE welcomes the fact that the Commission has opted to ensure coherence and continuity both with the previous employment guidelines and with the conclusions of the Lisbon European Summit. However, UNICE is concerned that the Commission's conclusions on the lack of progress on implementation of the "entrepreneurship" pillar are not reflected in the new guidelines, in particular as regards reduction of the overall tax burden and indirect labour costs. UNICE is also concerned about the coexistence of persistent structural unemployment – although figures are slightly on the decline – and the emergence of bottlenecks on labour markets. This situation calls for improvement of the quality of national education and training systems. Lastly, UNICE underlines the need to speed up structural reforms of all markets, including labour markets, to create the conditions for achieving sustainable growth and higher employment rates.

To view the position, please visit :

[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/EF108F20ED1E66E9C1256974004E9902/\\$File/EmpGuide-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/EF108F20ED1E66E9C1256974004E9902/$File/EmpGuide-e.pdf)

DOCUMENTS ADOPTED

-  UNICE position paper on the Commission's Communication on the social policy agenda
[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/D9EA3DF9503E7468C12569060049A65C/\\$File/Socpol-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/D9EA3DF9503E7468C12569060049A65C/$File/Socpol-e.pdf)
-  UNICE position paper on the Commission's proposal for Member States' employment policies for 2001 and recommendations to Member States
[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/EF108F20ED1E66E9C1256974004E9902/\\$File/EmpGuide-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/EF108F20ED1E66E9C1256974004E9902/$File/EmpGuide-e.pdf)
-  UNICE position paper on the Commission proposal for a Directive amending Directive 76/207 on equal treatment between men and women
[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/4AC4134114DD5CB1C125697C002A6F21/\\$File/EO76207-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/4AC4134114DD5CB1C125697C002A6F21/$File/EO76207-e.pdf)
-  UNICE response to the first phase of consultation of social partners on modernising and improving employment relations
[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/7B1CC768D3C80B74C1256974004DB792/\\$File/modernemp-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/7B1CC768D3C80B74C1256974004DB792/$File/modernemp-e.pdf)
-  UNICE message on the Charter of Fundamental rights to the Biarritz European Council
[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/4C5C2A339EDB4B7CC1256975002A462D/\\$File/FunRite-Biar.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/4C5C2A339EDB4B7CC1256975002A462D/$File/FunRite-Biar.pdf)
-  UNICE response to the first phase of consultation of social partners on occupational safety and health of self-employed workers
[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/69AACC17BED24FAEC125697C0030827C/\\$File/S&Hselfemp.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/69AACC17BED24FAEC125697C0030827C/$File/S&Hselfemp.pdf)
-  UNICE document "Occupational safety and health – a priority for employers"
<http://www.unice.org>

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ✍ UNICE position paper on vibrations (physical agents).
- ✍ Response to the second phase of consultation of social partners on asbestos.
- ✍ UNICE position paper on setting limit values at European level.
- ✍ Social partners' contribution to the reform of the Advisory Committee on Safety and Health and on the consultation of social partners in the field of Safety and Health.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

CLIMATE CHANGE

UNICE met the Chairman of the Council's Ad Hoc Group on Climate Change in Lyon on 14 September 2000, in the context of preparatory work by UNFCCC for COP-6, to be held in The Hague from 13 to 24 November 2000, with a view to taking stock of what strategy the EU should develop vis-à-vis COP-6. UNICE is preparing a contribution for this COP-6, which should allow progress to be made on the rules governing the Kyoto mechanisms. On 7 June 2000, UNICE published a position paper on these mechanisms, in particular JI and CDM.

To view the position, please visit :

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/504B68DAA826BD8FC125697E004BB695/\\$File/Kyotomech-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/504B68DAA826BD8FC125697E004BB695/$File/Kyotomech-e.pdf)

UNICE also issued, on 15 September 2000, its comments on the Commission green paper on greenhouse gas emissions trading in the EU.

To view the comments on The Commission green paper, please visit :

[http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/26592F35C82FEC8EC125696700448716/\\$File/EMISTRAD3.pdf](http://www.unice.org/unice/docum.nsf/AllDocumentsSearchEng/26592F35C82FEC8EC125696700448716/$File/EMISTRAD3.pdf)

For additional information, please contact: d.cloquet@unice.be

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

ENLARGEMENT: NEW POSITION PAPER

UNICE has published a new position paper on enlargement calling for speed and momentum to be maintained in the process. In this context, on 27 June 2000, the UNICE Task Force on Enlargement (UTFE) met Mr E. Landaburu, Director-General for enlargement, and community negotiators to assess the state of play of the enlargement process and exchange views on business-related issues.

The UNICE Task Force on Enlargement, consisting of one business representative acting as rapporteur for each candidate country, was set up in 1998. Its objective is to give business input to the enlargement process, in particular as regards the adoption, implementation and enforcement of the *acquis communautaire* in candidate countries.

To view the new position paper, please visit:

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/ABC8CC6C679092B3C12569770054C2E3/\\$File/Enlarg2000-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/ABC8CC6C679092B3C12569770054C2E3/$File/Enlarg2000-e.pdf)

CHINESE PRIME MINISTER VISITS UNICE



On 11 July, UNICE received the Prime Minister of China, H.E. Zhu Rongji. In front of an audience of over 250 European business leaders, the Prime Minister underlined the importance of strengthening EU-China relations, highlighted the progress of economic restructuring and reform in China and invited European companies to invest in China.

European business is very encouraged with the China-EU agreement on China's entry into WTO, which it has supported for years. UNICE's President, Baron Jacobs, expressed his hope to Prime Minister Zhu Rongji "that China's commitment to gradual opening of its markets and dismantling of barriers to trade will be confirmed in China's implementation of the WTO agreement". UNICE calls for the setting-up of a monitoring mechanism to identify possible difficulties and to determine, at an early stage, appropriate actions to alleviate them and prevent trade disputes from arising.

Business has an important role to play in the development of China-EU economic relations, as the historic visit of the Chinese Prime Minister to UNICE underlines. To that end, UNICE is deepening its relationship with the most representative Chinese business organisations.

To view the UNICE statement, please visit:

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/60DAE6C45C7F5FCBC1256920002CE82C/\\$File/Chinadec.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/60DAE6C45C7F5FCBC1256920002CE82C/$File/Chinadec.pdf)

WTO: NEW ROUND PREPARATIONS

UNICE is actively pursuing its action to prepare the successful launch of a comprehensive WTO round of negotiations. It is notably updating/complementing its positions on the various matters under discussion in Geneva.

Stakeholder dialogue on WTO issues: at the 20 July contact group meeting whose objective was to assess the first rounds of discussions, UNICE expressed its support for the process launched by DG Trade and, together with the other members, made specific recommendations of the group to improve it. Full information on this meeting and on the next issue groups meeting is available on the DG Trade website:

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/trade/index_en.htm

UNICE will participate in the specific DG Trade meeting on trade facilitation (27 September) and the DG Trade Market Access Symposium which will be held on 28 November.

In view of the 2000 TABD Conference which will be held on 16-18 November in Cincinnati, UNICE is actively involved in the preparatory work under way on WTO matters.

Further information please contact rex@unice.be

1ST EUROPEAN UNION-LATIN AMERICA BUSINESS SUMMIT

UNICE, together with CEOE, is organising the first meeting of EU and Latin American Presidents of Employer Organisations and senior business people. This meeting will be held in Madrid on 20 and 21 November 2000. Its objective is to reinforce business relations between the two regions and address issues of common interest. It is the first step in an ongoing process of co-ordination and cooperation.

The Summit will be divided into four regional and four horizontal working groups. The latter will deal with the role of Employer Organisations, the euro, business cooperation and the WTO. The regional working groups will be dedicated to EU relations with Mercosur and Chile, the Andean Community, Mexico, and Central America and the Caribbean.

Further information please contact rex@unice.be

UNIMED: BUSINESS NETWORK

UNICE is pleased to announce the installation of the Management Unit for the UNIMED Business Network project. This programme, managed by UNICE and financed by the European Commission, aims to strengthen South-Mediterranean employer organisations* and to network them with UNICE's member federations.

The first action included in the programme is a seminar which will be held on 10 November in Aix-en-Provence on the theme of "Strengthening the role and influence of business organisations". It will be organised on the eve of the meeting – in Marseille – of Euro-Mediterranean Foreign Affairs Ministers who will debate revision of the Barcelona process.

* Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey

For more information about the programme, please contact Mr P. Nicoletti
unimedbn@unice.be

WORK IN PROGRESS

- ✍ Updating of UNICE positions on WTO dossiers
- ✍ UNICE position paper on Japan
- ✍ Preparation of the first EU-Latin America business summit (Madrid, 20 and 21 November)
- ✍ White paper on the question of export controls on dual-use products

BUSINESS SERVICES

ENERGY: POST-LISBON

The “Energy” Group took stock of Commission work to deepen the internal market in energy, with Mr Ristori (Director, DG TREN) and other specialist officials. UNICE underlined the importance of making further progress in this area, and will be following this aspect of the post-Lisbon process closely in the months ahead.

For additional information, please contact: d.cloquet@unice.be

RAILWAY LIBERALISATION

UNICE and its members have been very active in this field, maintaining close contact with the European Parliament, organising visits to and informing MEPs of the business point of view of the situation of the railway sector and the measures to be taken. The European Parliament voted in its second reading of the so-called “railway infrastructure package” for a complete liberalisation of goods transport by rail in 2005, and for passenger transport by 2010. This almost completely coincided with the UNICE position. As the Council only favours liberalisation of international freight transport on a designated and limited network, UNICE decided to produce a manifesto, calling on the Member States and the European Institutions alike to liberalise the railway sector completely.

This manifesto was presented during visits to the President of the EP Committee for Regional Policy, Transport and Tourism, Mr Konstantinos Hatzidakis, the President of the Council of Transport Ministers, Mr Jean Claude Gayssot and the Vice-President of the European Commission, Ms de Palacio. During the visit to the President of the Council of Transport Ministers, UNICE’s delegation leader, Mr Daniel Cloquet (Director for Industrial Affairs), stressed the importance for industry of a clear time-table for complete liberalisation, and drew Mr Gayssot’s attention to the successful Swedish example of railway liberalisation.

UNICE’s Secretary General Dirk F. Hudig emphasised in the UNICE visit to European Commission Vice-president Ms de Palacio that the structural issue to be addressed is completion of the Internal Market, as the Heads of State agreed to in Lisbon, stating furthermore this is all the more necessary because of EU cost structures that are significantly higher than those in the US, resulting in a lower return on capital in the EU.

To view the Manifesto, please visit:

[http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/B185666A7F9A0323C12569670044FBA3/\\$File/transpman-e.pdf](http://www.unice.org/C125679E00338D8B/AllDocumentsSearchEng/B185666A7F9A0323C12569670044FBA3/$File/transpman-e.pdf)

REVISION OF THE COMMON TRANSPORT POLICY

Before the end of the year, the Commission will present its White Paper on the Revision of the Common Transport Policy (CTP), which is closely being monitored by UNICE. During UNICE's recent visit to Ms de Palacio, Dr Dubiel (President of UNICE's Transport Working Group) emphasised that the EU already lags behind in the area of logistics costs as compared with the US, and that the CTP should take account of Europe's trade and industry's competitiveness. Therefore industry needs free transport markets and a good and accessible infrastructure that can handle the trade flows resulting from economic growth.

EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

UNICE has adopted a position paper on the Commission communication "Making a reality of the European research area: guidelines for EU research activities (2002 – 2006) (website reference).

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TELECOMMUNICATIONS: LOCAL LOOPS

UNICE is preparing comments on unbundled access to the local loop (COM 2000-394).

For additional information, please contact: h.lueders@unice.be

YOUR OPINION?

Your comments and/or suggestions are welcome. Please do not hesitate to e-mail them to our Communication Department at <mailto:communications@unice.be>. For more information about UNICE and its member federations, consult UNICE's web site at www.unice.org. UNICE@NEWS is published with the kind support of the European Commission (<http://europa.eu.int/comm>).