

16 March 2001

**UNICE BLAMES ETUC FOR STALEMATE IN NEGOTIATIONS  
ON TEMPORARY AGENCY WORK**

Today, UNICE denied ETUC's allegations that employers are responsible for the stalemate in negotiations on temporary agency work.

"Negotiations have reached a critical point due to divergences of views between employers and trade unions on important points. But ETUC must realise that it takes two to tango. Negotiations can only suffer from repeated and unfounded attacks on employers" stressed UNICE President Jacobs.

"We have asked jointly the Commission an extension of the deadline of 9 months foreseen by the Treaty for the conclusion of legally binding agreements at European level. The purpose of this extension was to give a chance to an agreement. We had agreed that both sides would consult their respective decision-making bodies to check if solutions could be found to bridge existing differences. ETUC now says that instead of consulting its Executive Committee on possible solutions, it will report a failure of negotiations to its Executive Committee", continued President Jacobs.

"We will hold an extraordinary meeting of UNICE's Council of Presidents on 21 March as foreseen and will review the possibilities and prospects for continuing the negotiations. We can only hope that ETUC will do the same. If trade unions are not even ready to face the questions which are difficult for them but expect employers to simply endorse their views, it is certainly not UNICE that should be blamed for a failure of negotiations" concluded President Jacobs.