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**UNICE CALLS ON ETUC TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS
ON TEMPORARY AGENCY WORK**

UNICE's Council of Presidents decided today in favour of continuing negotiations on temporary agency work. "We are convinced that the social partners are best placed to find the right balance between flexibility and security. Making an agreement at European level should be possible if trade unions are prepared to compromise" declared President Jacobs.

"European employers have offered legal protection against discrimination for temporary agency workers from the outset of negotiations. This would apply to all conditions of employment. However, flexibility should be preserved when deciding with whom temporary agency workers should be compared. Two possibilities exist. The comparison can either be made with a worker in the user company or with a worker of the same agency." stressed President Jacobs. "UNICE accepts that the comparison should be made with the user company for health and safety conditions and maximum working time or minimum resting periods. However, ETUC's insistence that the comparable worker in the user company should be the first point of reference for other employment conditions is unjustified. Member States, through legislation, or social partners, through collective agreements should decide who the reference should be " continued President Jacobs.

The second point of divergence with ETUC concerns the prevention of abuse. In a spirit of compromise, UNICE is prepared to include a clause whereby Member States may ban or limit temporary agency work in specific sectors or activities for specific reasons, provided that such limitations are regularly reviewed to check if they are still justified.

"We are prepared to continue negotiations on this basis but UNICE will not be an accomplice to establishment of a system damaging employment. This would be contrary to the Lisbon objectives." concluded President Jacobs.