

Brussels, 4 September 2003

**BUSINESS FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE GLOBE UNITED IN SUPPORT OF
WTO MULTILATERAL TRADING SYSTEM**

Ten leading business organisations, including UNICE, have joined forces to strongly support the WTO negotiations to be held in Cancún from 10-14 September. The organisations represent companies in Africa, Australia, Brazil, Chile, the European Union, Japan, Mexico and the Mediterranean area. These organisations have agreed to a *Joint Business Charter for Cancún* which is still open to all national or regional representative organisations that would like to join. In the document, business states its full commitment to the multilateral trading system process and its expectation that a successful Cancún Conference will send a confidence-boosting signal to investors, traders and consumers, bolster the rules-based multilateral trading system and foster international cooperation. Next week must also clear the way for the final phase of the DDA (Doha Development Agenda) negotiations.

The WTO multilateral trading system offers the best platform for countries around the world seeking ways to expand and improve global trade. For business, the Doha Development Agenda agreed by WTO Members remains the winning formula for global economic growth, job creation and consumer choice in developed and developing countries.

Philippe de Buck, Secretary General of UNICE stated: "*European business will spare no effort to facilitate progress in all areas of negotiation as we remain deeply committed to the multilateral process and ambitious results to the DDA negotiations*". He added, "*The world is transforming itself, leading to greater trade and exchanges among cultures, business and consumers. The Charter we have signed today shows that business from different parts of the world believes in the benefits of the multilateral system*".

The Charter calls for an agreement in Cancún on:

- The conditions to move agriculture negotiations forward
- Modalities for non-agriculture market access negotiations combining tariff and non-tariff measures
- The basis for starting negotiations, without prejudice to the eventual outcome, on the Singapore issues (trade facilitation, trade and investment, transparency in government procurement and trade and competition)
- Clear guidelines and significant progress on special and differential treatment for developing countries and least developed countries
- Renewed commitment for further services liberalisation across the four modes of delivery.

Finally, UNICE underlines with its Charter partners that WTO Members must assign all the priority and necessary resources to the Doha Development Agenda so that the negotiations can be successfully concluded by the 1 January 2005 deadline.

Time is short but the promise of the DDA can still be achieved.

The full text of the *Joint Business Charter for Cancún* is attached. It includes the list of all the organisations supporting the Charter.

Note to the editor:

UNICE speaks on behalf of 16 million small, medium and large companies active in Europe. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 35 central industrial and employers federations from 28 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.