

2 August 2004

**WTO-DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: UNICE WELCOMES THE WTO DECISION BUT CALLS FOR MORE INDUSTRIAL MARKET ACCESS**

On 31 July in Geneva, WTO Members injected new momentum into the Doha Development Agenda negotiations (DDA) by establishing a roadmap for the coming months. UNICE welcomes this long-awaited decision which puts the DDA negotiations back on track and indicates WTO Members' strong attachment to the multilateral trading system and support for the liberalisation process.

WTO Members are now in a position to pursue the DDA negotiations, with the objective of significantly opening markets for goods and services and improving the rules of the international trading system, on the basis of the agreement reached in Geneva. If economic development is the aim of the DDA, then all WTO Members should contribute in the coming months leading to the 2005 WTO Ministerial, in a balanced way, in the negotiating process underway in all areas of the negotiations.

UNICE Secretary General Philippe de Buck declared, "*European companies have been looking for positive news from Geneva since the collapse of the DDA negotiations in Cancun. The package is very good news even if we regret that the overall level of ambition of the DDA has been reduced and there is still a lot of uncertainty surrounding the industrial market access negotiations.*

*Don't be mistaken however, the road ahead of us is still long and difficult. European business will remain mobilised to push the negotiations toward a final agreement. The WTO needs to move the negotiations by December 2005 to deliver on the DDA promise of generating more economic growth in Europe and at the global level."*

More effort is now necessary to put figures in the frameworks agreed on 31 July in Geneva and to transform what are still just attractive promises into reality. For UNICE, the DDA negotiations should lead to:

- Real improvements in worldwide market access for goods and services;
- Significant progress in the industrial market access negotiations to reach the UNICE goal of reducing all tariffs to a maximum of 15% by the end of the DDA;
- An ambitious trade facilitation agreement that contributes to reducing effectively the cost of trading in all countries;
- Special and differential treatment provisions for developing countries that truly need it while ensuring that emerging countries and big developing countries make balanced WTO commitments;
- Rapid progress in negotiations on the other issues of the negotiations and the rules-related issues in particular, such as antidumping, so that all WTO Members will play by the same rules.

UNICE will continue to actively support the DDA negotiating process with a view to finalising it as soon as possible and based on balanced agreements which will benefit all members.

Note to the editor:

UNICE represents more than 16 million small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 36 central industrial and employers federations from 30 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe