

29 October 2004

**SIGNING OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY –
RATIFICATION MUST FOLLOW SWIFTLY**

UNICE applauds the signature of the new Treaty of Rome establishing a Constitution for Europe, 47 years after the signature of the Treaty that created the European Communities.

The new Constitutional Treaty entails improved institutional arrangements and will provide the basis to:

- strengthen European competitiveness, adaptability to structural change and employment prospects;
- strengthen Europe's economies and fully realise EMU's potential;
- successfully enlarge the EU without any distortion of the Internal Market;
- strengthen Europe's economic power on the international stage.

UNICE Secretary General Philippe de Buck: *"We are witnessing a significant day in the ongoing construction of the European Union. The new Constitutional Treaty makes important changes that are necessary to the efficient functioning of the EU institutions. The opportunity to implement them must not be missed."*

In the interest of bringing the European Union closer to the citizens, the ratification procedures in the Member States must be accompanied by a communication campaign providing citizens with comprehensive information on the changes made by the Constitutional Treaty. Via its member federations, UNICE will continue to voice its positive appraisal of the Constitutional Treaty.

Note to the editor:

UNICE is the voice of more than 20 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.

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