

Brussels, 19 August 2002

BUSINESS CONTRIBUTION FOR THE JO'BURG SUMMIT ON GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

World leaders will meet in Johannesburg for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) next week. UNICE will participate with a business delegation. The objective of the summit is to bring forward a new agenda for sustainable development which guides countries, business and society in the search for effective solutions to eradicate poverty, exploit resources, manage investments, develop technology, and above all, improve the lives of people.

"The Summit is about delivering on the promises of Rio. Business is ready to be part of the solution. Business needs a motivating framework that sets out the conditions needed by responsible companies" says Philippe de Buck, UNICE Secretary General.

UNICE has five **priorities for action**:

- Focus on economic growth. Stimulating entrepreneurship and growth is vital to combat poverty which is also a central cause of environmental damage. Increased employment opportunities are dependent on economic growth.
- Producing more with less. The prospect of nine billion people by 2050 requires development of new resource-efficient technologies as well as dissemination of valuable existing technology, together with a focus on research and use of natural resources. Companies' voluntary initiatives for dissemination of good practices must be supported.
- Implementation of the Doha Development Agenda (DDA). DDA is the right frame for the setting of conditions for sustainability, and trade and investment liberalisation which is a formidable engine for raising living standards.
- Good governance at all levels. It is a prerequisite for attracting investment and therefore to ensure sustainable development. Local governments, international bodies and national and EU business have a share of responsibility in applying rules and standards.
- Capacity-building. In less developed countries a poor business climate seriously handicaps growth and participation in the world economy. DDA's commitments to more coordinated capacity-building and increased assistance must be made operational hand in hand with promotion of the private sector.

The challenge for developing countries in the next decade will be attracting foreign direct investment. Development aid funds will not be a sufficient remedy to satisfy their needs. UNICE urges promotion of partnership (between governments, business, international agencies, NGO project managers and beneficiaries of aid) to optimise the use of existing resources.

Note to the editor

UNICE is the official voice of more than 16 million small, medium and large companies active in Europe, employing over 106 million people. Active in European affairs since 1958, UNICE's members are 34 central industrial and employers federations from 27 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

The full text of the UNICE position on Sustainable Development can be found at www.unice.org

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