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**ERNEST-ANTOINE SEILLIÈRE SUCCEEDS JÜRGEN STRUBE AS  
PRESIDENT OF UNICE**

**Taking effect on 1 July 2005, Ernst-Antoine Seillière, CEO of Wendel Investissement and currently President of MEDEF (French business confederation), will succeed Dr Jürgen Strube, ending his two-year term as President of UNICE. Mr Seillière outlined at a press conference his main priorities for the coming two years. At a subsequent reception, UNICE thanked Dr Strube for his great commitment to the European business community during his Presidency.**

Dr Jürgen Strube, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of BASF, pointed out the main events that have happened during his Presidency: enlargement of the EU, elections to the European Parliament, new Commission, mid-term review of the Lisbon Strategy and launch of the Growth and Jobs Strategy, as well as increasing competition from China and India among other countries. For this reason Dr Strube put the competitiveness of the European economy at the centre of his activities. With a view to the current EU crisis, he said: *"I trust that every effort will be made to ensure that a strategy in Europe to secure growth and jobs is seen as an opportunity in the current debate on the future of Europe"*.

In these difficult times for European integration, Ernest-Antoine Seillière outlined his priorities:

- Place enterprise, the creator of wealth, at the centre of the debate on the future of Europe,
- Take an active role in the social dialogue, aimed at finding solutions for social progress in Europe,
- Make innovation the motor of development and progress,
- Communicate the need for competitiveness and its favourable implications for growth and jobs.

Ernest-Antoine Seillière: *"I will be defending a European project that strengthens our economy and makes it sustainable. European entrepreneurs place emphasis on the Growth and Jobs Strategy and will continue to communicate this clearly. As the voice of business in Europe, UNICE wants to engage actively in the debate on the future of Europe that the incoming President of the European Council, Prime Minister Blair has called for"*.

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 38 central industrial and employers federations from 32 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.