

BUSINESS IS CRYING OUT FOR EUROPEAN LEADERS ABLE TO PUSH FORWARD VITAL REFORMS, SAYS UNICE PRESIDENT

UNICE President Ernest-Antoine Seillière and CBI President John Sunderland met UK Prime Minister Tony Blair today (Thursday) in London. President Seillière made clear that the deep crisis in the EU must be solved urgently. European business is counting on Tony Blair as President of the European Council to steer the process that will take Europe out of its inertia.

Globalisation, demographic ageing and technical change are enormous challenges that will not disappear but accelerate and put added pressure on Europe to adapt to change. The business world needs Europe to come up with a shared vision of design and governance for the enlarged Europe.

UNICE is very supportive of Mr Blair launching the discussion on how the social model should be modernised. In preparation for the informal meeting of Heads of State, UNICE President Seillière asked UK Prime Minister Tony Blair to persuade his fellow colleagues to send a very strong message to European public opinion for reform in order to stimulate growth and jobs. This will reinvigorate European confidence and help it get to grips with the challenges ahead.

Commenting, President Seillière said:

"Business is crying out for European leaders able to show the way and push forward vital reforms which will secure stronger economic growth and real social

progress. We hope that the spirit of reform will be at the heart of all of the actions taken during the UK Presidency, and particularly at the October summit."

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