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ANOTHER DOCUMENT ON SME POLICY? SMEs WANT ACTION AND RESULTS!

Today's Commission Communication on "a modern SME policy" rightly highlights the importance of entrepreneurship and SMEs for the success and growth of the EU economy. Representing almost 20 million entrepreneurs and SMEs, UNICE supports Vice-President Verheugen's initiative of streamlining and providing a coherent list of actions to foster a real SME policy.

This is not the first policy document on entrepreneurship and SMEs and to date, entrepreneurs and SMEs have not really felt a difference in their daily business.

To be consistent, the effect of legislation on SMEs must be envisaged throughout all Commission policies and in that context UNICE strongly supports recognition that SME policy is transversal by nature and making the "Think Small First" principle effective across all EU policies.

This approach must be adopted also by the Council, the European Parliament and national governments if they are to mend their ways when adopting or implementing legislation affecting entrepreneurs and SMEs.

The actions foreseen on entrepreneurship education, access to finance, taxation, better regulation and internationalisation of SMEs have our support but we reiterate the business community's request to work with the EU institutions as early as possible in policy initiatives to make the Partnership for Growth and Jobs a success.

Chairman of UNICE's Entrepreneurship & SME Committee and Chairman / CEO of Kirchhoff Automotive, Arndt Kirchhoff commented:

"We as SMEs are pleased to read documents on SME policy for growth and employment, but as we have consistently said: SMEs don't want documents that just say the right things, we want them to be followed by action and results. We count on Vice-President Verheugen to make the vision of a modern SME policy a reality and assure him that we are ready to engage with policy makers".

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 39 central industrial and employers' federations from 33 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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