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COOPERATION ON ENERGY IS AN URGENT NEED FOR EUROPE

UNICE fully supports the European Commission's initiative of publishing a green paper that sets out to strengthen cooperation within the EU in the field of energy.

Ernest-Antoine Seillière, UNICE President: *"We can no longer afford the luxury of twenty-five energy policies developing without reference to a shared strategy."* He added: *"The EU institutions must organise to analyse and take an integrated approach to the energy-related issues of security of supply, competitiveness and environment."*

The Commission can and must facilitate management of governments' responsibilities by taking more initiatives that reflect this integrated vision, notably in the following areas:

1. securing a diversified energy supply by looking at all possible energy sources, including renewables and nuclear energy;
2. ensuring a secure energy supply by promoting a dialogue – at national and EU levels – between consumer countries and strategic energy producers;
3. creation of a truly open EU market for gas and electricity, on which progress is insufficient. UNICE calls on the Commission to consider all powers and legislative competences at its disposal for strengthening competition. Existing legislation must be applied not only to the letter but also in spirit. Due attention must be paid to the development of networks and reinforcement of interconnections;
4. controlling the environmental impact of energy production and use through policies which better reflect the sustainable development concept.

Recent hikes in energy prices and increasingly clear signals about the need for a new international cooperation regime for climate change create a strong better governance challenge for Europe. It is essential that Europe meets this challenge.

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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