

7 April 2006

BUSINESSES CALL FOR A BOOST TO EUROPE

At a special meeting in Paris to envisage the future of European integration, the Presidents of the national business federations that constitute the membership of UNICE, the confederation of European business, underlined that:

- growth in Europe is significantly slower than in the rest of the world;
- globalisation is ineluctable, with new emerging economies becoming key players;
- the economic internationalisation of companies and markets will only intensify, both within the European Union and beyond.

In this context, European companies are worried that Europe has run into the sand, without effective governance, hesitant about its political project and poorly understood by citizens.

The Presidents of national federations recall the essential objectives of companies:

- Member States must implement competitiveness-enhancing reforms in order to achieve the Lisbon objectives,
- the European market must be fully integrated,
- the European Union must have effective governance,
- protectionist tendencies must be combated,
- enlargement opportunities must be seized to the full,
- the European social model must be modernised in order to be preserved.

They mandate UNICE to strengthen its action and its communication to promote these objectives.

“European companies are worried to see the European project weaken at a time when globalisation is in full swing. They call on European decision-makers to take measures urgently to reinvigorate the European Union” concluded Ernest-Antoine Seillière, President of UNICE. *“I have been mandated to amplify UNICE’s action and communication for a stronger and more active European Union capable of improving growth, motivating new generations and giving them hope for a better future”*.

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.

For further information, please contact: Maria Fernanda Fau +32(0)2 237.65.62

www.unice.org