

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

5 July 2006

### **UNICE, THE CONFEDERATION OF EUROPEAN BUSINESS & NIPPON KEIDANREN – JOINT STATEMENT ON THE WTO DDA NEGOTIATIONS**

UNICE, the Confederation of European Business, and Nippon Keidanren have worked together for many years to support of the WTO Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations to strengthen development, competitiveness and global economic growth. With the failure of the Special Ministerial in Geneva last week and the crucial end of July deadlines rapidly approaching, EU and Japanese business are concerned with the slow progress achieved since the WTO Hong Kong Ministerial.

As the voice of business of two of the largest economies in the world, UNICE and Nippon Keidanren urge WTO members to exercise the political leadership needed to achieve successful and ambitious results in the negotiations before the end of 2006. The support of business in the EU and Japan for the DDA is conditional to achieving new significant commercial opportunities in non-agricultural market access (NAMA) and services. Further postponement would seriously impact all WTO members. It is time to find common ground for agreement.

Nippon Keidanren and UNICE advocate for an ambitious Swiss tariff-cutting formula to achieve real market access in all industrial sectors among OECD and emerging countries. Coefficients for the formula should be in sight of each other, with a maximum coefficient of 15 for emerging countries. To boost the effectiveness of formula-based tariff reductions, EU and Japanese business call for willing industries to agree to sector harmonisation or elimination and the elimination of non-tariff barriers (NTBs). A new NTB mediation mechanism should be discussed in the WTO to facilitate the removal of NTBs in the future.

Services negotiations must achieve an equivalent level of ambition to other DDA issues, which requires significantly improved offers to boost services trade. UNICE and Nippon Keidanren call for an ambitious and binding Trade Facilitation Agreement to reduce the costs of trade.

Further progress in agriculture by all partners is a crucial element to secure a successful outcome of the DDA.

UNICE and Nippon Keidanren support special and differential treatment (SDT) for developing countries that truly need it. However, SDT should not serve as an excuse to negotiate an OECD-only round in which the emerging countries contribute little or nothing.

UNICE and Nippon Keidanren are committed to working together with their negotiators and with other business partners for a successful and ambitious conclusion of the DDA.

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**NOTE TO THE EDITOR:**

UNICE, the Confederation of European Business represents 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                      Tel: +32(0)2 237.65.62

[www.unice.org](http://www.unice.org)

Nippon Keidanren is a key organization in Japan, consisting of more than 1,300 companies and about 130 industrial sector associations, and represents the interests of all businesses.

For further information, please contact:

Tel: +81-3-5204-1500

[www.keidanren.or.jp](http://www.keidanren.or.jp)