

**Ms Margot Wallström**  
Vice-President & Commissioner for Institutional  
Relations and Communication Strategy  
200, Rue de la Loi  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

10 July 2006

THE PRESIDENT

Dear Commissioner,

In response to the Commission White Paper on European Communication Policy issued on 1 February, I would like to share with you the vision of European business on how to bridge the gap between the European Union (EU) and its citizens.

We believe that Europe faces serious difficulties in modernising and adapting to challenges ahead such as globalisation, ageing population and lacklustre growth. On top of that we have a European governance deadlock following the collapse in ratification of the European Constitutional Treaty.

It is more critical than ever that the vision of a European Union with growth and jobs is communicated in a way that reaches European citizens. Europe must better explain why reform measures for more competitiveness will eventually be in the interest of society as a whole. It has to be understood that reform is the basis of progress and therefore a prerequisite for growth, jobs, and well-being.

Furthermore, globalisation is a fact that both opens unlimited opportunities while being perceived by some as a threat. For UNICE, Europe can effectively underpin the movement for the necessary reforms, strengthening solidarity and highlighting Europe's strengths which stand to benefit from globalisation. Europe must not be the problem but part of the solution.

UNICE, the Confederation of European business, supports investing in a European-wide communication strategy initiated by EU institutions, implemented by national governments and parliaments and in partnership with the business community.

The communication strategy will need to rely on meaningful actions about positive achievements of the Union: peace, the single market, the euro, Erasmus programme, international trade, infrastructure networks. Even more important, communications will have to focus on the challenges ahead and the necessary solutions. A shared vision of the future of Europe has to be endorsed by EU citizens. Ultimately, the confidence of Europeans in Europe must be restored.

For UNICE, communications should focus on the EU key policy priorities:

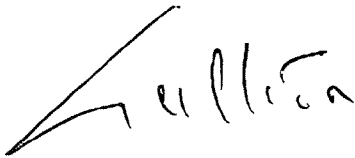
- Implement the reforms for growth and jobs,
- Integrate the European market,
- Govern the EU efficiently,
- Fight national protectionism,
- Take advantage of the opportunities of enlargement,
- Reform European social systems to make them sustainable.

UNICE and its members are already well aware of the importance of those issues. Therefore, the UNICE Day "*Why do companies care about Europe*" on 17 October will again be an opportunity to communicate on substance with entrepreneurs across Europe.

Many of the principles and tools mentioned in the White Paper are right in theory but will only work if the correct policy decisions are taken without undue delay. Time is a luxury we do not have.

I trust that these views will be taken into consideration at the end of the consultation period. We count on the European institutions to play their key role in the enormous job that has to be done in the coming months.

Yours sincerely,



Ernest-Antoine Seillière