

16 October 2006

**UNICE Day Opening
By Ernest-Antoine Seillière, President of UNICE
17 October 2006**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I am pleased to see the room packed with entrepreneurs who have left their businesses for one day to demonstrate for business in Brussels at our UNICE Day: Why do companies care about Europe?.
- We are some 900 people today, with the best ever presence of UNICE Presidents and Director Generals coming from the Member States. Also we have many representatives from the European Commission, the European Parliament as well as national and regional governments. All this in the presence of the press.
- I would like to thank as well the sponsors which have made this Day possible: Arcelor-Mittal, IBM, ING, PSA Peugeot Citroen, Sabancin Siemens, Telecom Italia, Tesco and Vedior.
- In addition, I would like to thank you the following media: Borsen, European Voice, Expansion, Financial Times and Les Echos which have shown an interest in our event.
- *Why do companies care about Europe, Does Europe care about companies?* These two questions we will debate today with the help of inspiring business leaders, politicians and representatives of civil society.

Not least, with the contribution of the current Finnish Presidency and the German government that will take over in 2007.

- Why this theme? Because Europe is not on the right track.
- Entrepreneurs keep doing their business, focusing on competitiveness and trying to get into new markets, creating new jobs. Around us, entrepreneurs, the world is getting organised.
- We feel that that Europe, instead, is not doing enough on, first, its governance problem and, second, on setting the priorities that should lead its policies.
- What attitude to take faced to this situation? Indifference or involvement?
- We care, ,and because we care we talk about it and are prepared to let our voice be heard! That's what today is about.
- I hope you enjoy and take an active participation on the Day.
- I would like now, Ladies and Gentlemen, to give the floor to the Prime Minister of Finland, Mr Matti Vanhanen.
- Welcome to the UNICE Day, we are very happy to have you on board.

