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TRADE DEFENCE POLICY: LEGITIMACY, TRANSPARENCY AND PREDICTABILITY IS THE WAY FORWARD

The globalisation of the economy combined with insufficient bilateral and multilateral trade rules to remove competitive distortions makes trade defence policy relevant for European industry. Consequently, UNICE expects the Commission to pursue the Green Paper consultation process on trade defence instruments in a balanced and objective manner that takes account of the realities of international competition. UNICE will participate actively in the forthcoming debate to address concerns about the transparency and predictability of trade defence measures for European business.

The reflection on trade defence must recognise the importance of the broader WTO context – including the necessity of negotiating clear commitments from major emerging countries such as China and India to respect basic rules for a competitive level playing field. In particular, UNICE highlights the growing concerns about government interference in transition economies which distorts international markets for essential industrial raw materials. The blatant violation of WTO rules must be stopped. The European Union must also press for improvements to WTO anti-dumping and anti-subsidy rules to ensure that European industry will benefit from reciprocity of treatment in this field.

Ernest-Antoine Seillière, President of UNICE, declared: *“The Green Paper consultation should clearly underline the legitimacy of trade defence policy to counter dumping and government subsidies that harm European producers. At the same time, European business requires transparent and predictable trade defence instruments to strengthen global competitiveness and enable companies to take advantage of global trade opportunities.”*

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.

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