



PRESS RELEASE

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European companies disappointed with Doha blockage

BUSINESSEUROPE – the Confederation of European Business – today expressed its disappointment that WTO negotiations in Geneva had ended without reaching a successful conclusion. An ambitious Doha Round has the potential to give the world economy a much-needed fillip and to spur future growth through new trading possibilities.

Given the progress that has been made during these discussions, however, BUSINESSEUROPE urges WTO Director General Pascal Lamy not to give up on the process and to resume the discussions after a suitable cooling off period. The Doha Round is close to conclusion and the opportunity should not be allowed to slip away. BUSINESSEUROPE thanks Commissioner Mandelson and his team of trade negotiators for their hard work and commitment to this process and their efforts to find a compromise.

BUSINESSEUROPE continues to insist that the Round will only be of genuine value if it opens up new market access opportunities for exporters around the world. The EU and the US have now agreed to substantial liberalisation of agricultural, industry and services trade. When negotiations move forward, the emerging countries have to play their part by agreeing to further open their markets.

1. On industry, with the formula negotiations close to conclusion, the EU must push for sector tariff elimination agreements with OECD and emerging countries to reach a critical mass for in key sectors. It is also essential to ensure that a robust NTB mechanism and strong sector-specific non-tariff barrier proposals are included.
2. On services, BUSINESSEUROPE notes that some progress was made this week and calls on the EU to ensure that countries will make firm and more ambitious commitments on new market access with limited carve-outs.
3. On agriculture, BUSINESSEUROPE underscores the need for progress on geographical indications which should compensate for EU agricultural market liberalisation. BUSINESSEUROPE cautions against making trade-offs on the Convention on Biological Diversity that could undermine major EU intellectual property rights interests.

Philippe de Buck, Secretary General of BUSINESSEUROPE declared: “*EU exporters need real market access results and clear trade rules to develop their business over the next decade. Now is not the time to give up on the Doha Round*”.

NOTE TO THE EDITOR

BUSINESSEUROPE – the Confederation of European Business represents more than 20 million small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, BUSINESSEUROPE Members are 40 central industrial and employers’ federations from 34 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

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