



SPEECH

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**EU-INDIA BUSINESS SUMMIT
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**ADDRESS BY MR ROBERT COURT
CHAIRMAN, INDIA NETWORK, BUSINESSEUROPE**

Prime Minister Singh, Minister Nath, Minister Idrac,
Dear Presidents,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

- I am very pleased to be with you here today in this the 9th EU-India Business Summit, a regular feature for the friends of India in Europe and of Europe in India.
- I would like to thank the MEDEF for the excellent organisation of this event and for their commitment to make it a success.
- I would also like personally to welcome the President of CII and the Senior Vice President of FICCI to Europe for this event and thank them for their dedication to strengthening the EU-India economic relationship.
- For BUSINESSEUROPE, India is a strategic partner. The EU is India's main partner in trade, investment, and cooperation aid. Our trade and investment relationship is growing exponentially. However, this is not enough as there remains an enormous potential for further integration of our two economies.
- What else can we do together?

The WTO Doha Round

- First, ensure a successful and ambitious outcome of the WTO Doha Round, which remains the priority for European business to improve market access for and ensure a non-discriminatory treatment for them in third countries.
- The Doha Round of WTO multilateral trade negotiations has made enormous progress in 2008, progress, which none of us would have imagined possible. Nonetheless final agreement has so far eluded our lead negotiators.
- The consequences of a failure would be substantial for all regions in the world but especially for the poorest countries. The DDA is crucial to lift millions of people out of poverty and reinforce economic growth in both India and the EU.
- Indian and European business will need to continue to work together to put the negotiations back on track for a successful conclusion, if not in the coming weeks and months then as early as possible in 2009.
- For European business, reaching an ambitious conclusion to the Round remains the number one international priority. However, in order to be supported by European business, the Round must achieve significant gains in real market access for industrial goods (NAMA), services, trade facilitation and progress in other aspects of the negotiations, including rules.

The EU-India Free-Trade Agreement

- The second issue to reinforce our economic relationship is the bilateral negotiations for an EU-India Free-Trade Agreement (FTA).
- For European business, the WTO does not exclude the bilateral track. Both processes are complementary and can be held in parallel. FTAs, if in line with WTO rules, are a building block for the multilateral trade system.
- BUSINESSEUROPE fully supports an ambitious EU-India free-trade agreement. The EU and India complement each other in their diversified economic structures. An FTA will be a win-win for all.
- However, I cannot hide my concern that the negotiations for this agreement, which are already ongoing for more than a year, are not advancing as quickly as they should be. The business community is ready to do its part to support and advance the negotiations. We hope that our governments will take us up on this offer of support.

- As for the agenda, BUSINESSEUROPE support an ambitious package that will mark a new chapter in EU-India economic relations. In our view if we wish to add real dynamism the agreement must be both deep and wide. It must therefore provide for:
 - deep liberalisation of trade in goods (all industrial tariffs and non-tariff barriers) and services.
 - improving business conditions in investment.
 - protecting intellectual property rights.
 - tackling regulatory cooperation and NTBs.
 - dealing with trade facilitation.
 - including disciplines on government procurement.

Energy and Climate Change

- Finally, I would like to underline the importance for BUSINESSEUROPE of the issue of climate change. Climate change is a global challenge that requires a global solution.
- To achieve this, the European Union is designing a comprehensive programme to cut greenhouse gas emissions. Business in Europe supports this process but knows that it cannot be achieved alone.
- Furthermore, BUSINESSEUROPE recognises the huge potential of the Clean Development Mechanism to contribute to solving climate challenge and calls for the removal of restrictions on the amounts of credits that companies can buy.
- In short we hope to work with all of our partners to make contributions to this effort. Each in a manner suited to his own situation certainly, but a contribution nonetheless. We hope that this will be an area of fruitful collaboration with India into the future.
- Both India and Europe have a lot to gain from a boost in our relationship. Continued reform and opening of India's economy is the key to building on India's success. Continued growth in India offers huge potential for Europe. The European market now also offers ever more promise to India. Given what is at stake, I trust that EU and Indian business can make a joint contribution to closer cooperation in the future.
- Thank you.
