

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Mr José Manuel Barroso
President
European Commission
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Bruxelles

3 November 2008

Dear President,

RE: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND THEIR PROMOTION AT EU LEVEL

In times of greater economic stringency, companies would like to play a growing role in helping public authorities to tackle some of the key challenges that Europe is facing. In this context, BUSINESSEUROPE believes that the promotion of public-private partnerships (PPP) should form part of the measures that member states implement at the initiative of the EU to prevent a major economic meltdown and to restore confidence.

BUSINESSEUROPE believes that PPPs can, if managed correctly, bring many benefits to the economy and to society. As illustrated by the enclosed publication that we have recently developed in this area, PPPs can improve the quality of services in Europe, improve public spending, allow for faster delivery of infrastructure projects and stimulate innovation and adaptation to sustainability and climate change constraints.

The number of PPPs in Europe is still very limited and there is a serious need to overcome obstacles to their development and their expansion into new areas.

In this context, BUSINESSEUROPE calls on the EU and public authorities in Europe to remove barriers that restrict partnerships between the public and private sector by:

- supporting wider use of PPPs to improve public service innovation;
- promoting fair competition and a level playing field between providers from the public and private sectors, to ensure that the best provider available can meet our citizens' needs;
- ensuring that cohesion and structural funding can be combined with PPPs to optimise EU financing;
- sharing best practices across countries and working closely with Europe's business community to help shape a positive vision of PPPs across Europe;
- supporting information and training programmes for Europe's civil servants and decision-makers to enhance their capabilities in working with PPP contracts.

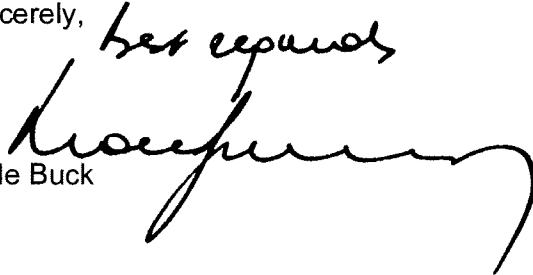
These messages were shared with approximately 500 public authority and company representatives during a BUSINESSEUROPE high-level event at the European Commission on 8 October, in the context of this year's Open Days. Speakers at this event included Luc van den Brande, Commissioner Hübner and Jean-Pierre Jouyet.

We were delighted to hear both representatives from public authorities and companies agree that in a world where budgetary and financial resources are getting scarcer, PPPs are an important tool that can lead to more efficient public spending.

In view of the European Council's invitation to the Commission to make proposals to preserve the competitiveness of European industry and to help restore growth in Europe (Presidency conclusions – Brussels, 15 and 16 October 2009) and the upcoming extraordinary EU summit on 7 November we hope that you will be able to take our views on PPPs into account in the discussions.

A similar letter has been sent to Mr Pierre Sellal, Permanent Representative of France to the European Union.

Yours sincerely,

best regards

Philippe de Buck

Encl: brochure on PPPs