

15 December 2008

DOHA ROUND: NOT IN LINE WITH G20 INSTRUCTIONS

BUSINESSEUROPE deplores that the WTO ministerial conference, planned to take place from 17 to 19 December in Geneva, has officially been called off. It is regrettable that, despite very intensive technical negotiations in the last days, major WTO members could not overcome existing differences and clear the way for a ministerial meeting.

In these times of economic uncertainty, it would have been a strong signal of confidence and clear commitment to the multilateral open trading system of the WTO.

BUSINESSEUROPE President Ernest-Antoine Seillière said: *"I cannot understand that when the G20 leaders have given a strong signal to finalize the negotiations before the end of the year it is even not possible to convene a ministerial conference. It must be clear that protectionism will not help as the global economic downturn will affect all countries in the world."*

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.

For further information, please contact: Peter Vertessy +32(0)2 237.65.03
www.business europe.eu