



Mr José Manuel Durão Barroso

President
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
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Dear President,

Next week you will start your meetings with the political groups in the European Parliament as the European Council's candidate to lead the next European Commission.

After suffering severe consequences from the global financial meltdown, European companies and citizens aspire above all to brighter and more sustainable economic prospects. You have today a unique opportunity to present a fresh vision for EU policies over the next five years, responding to these concerns and rebuilding confidence for the recovery.

Putting companies and entrepreneurs at the heart of EU's future policy agenda will be a key success factor for the European Union but also for all its citizens. It is through business development and investments that Europe will find the capacity to meet societal and environmental challenges successfully and at the same time rebuild a sound macroeconomic environment.

This is why we expect from the next Commission an unwavering commitment to open market principles and to pushing forward the necessary reforms to strengthen Europe's capacity for growth and job creation. The following issues will deserve particular attention in the future:

- The financial system must be fixed and the credit flow restored. Reforms in the European and international context will need to durably reinforce the resilience of the financial system while better supporting access to finance to stimulate entrepreneurship, innovation, investment and trade.
- The attractiveness of the EU's internal market, R&D and regulatory environment will play a critical role for the recovery, as corporate strategies are being reassessed in a new global environment. This should be reflected in the Commission legislative proposals and the financial means made available in the EU budget to support competitiveness.
- It will also be the task of the Commission to help develop an exit strategy to excessive public deficits and ensure a return to fiscal sustainability in each of the Member States. Coordination of national reform efforts to enhance growth and the sustainability of social systems will be vital and should be further reinforced.



- The EU also needs a solid strategy to boost employment and human capital in an ageing society. The business community is committed to looking at the best way to activate the labour market and enhance employment and skills levels. The European social dialogue is a means to achieve these goals.
- The EU has taken the lead by deciding on a broad energy and climate change policy. European companies expect that the Commission will form an international climate change strategy which allows EU industry to compete globally and ensures energy security at affordable costs.
- Europe must set the pace of international policy discussions, contributing to a balanced and sustainable development of the global economy and fighting protectionism everywhere. The Commission will need to better coordinate its actions and that of Member States in order to defend common positions in international fora.
- Europe's leading role in international trade requires a sustained commitment to free-trade negotiations. A successful WTO Round is the best tool to counter rising protectionism and is a winning formula to help get us out of the economic crisis. The rapid conclusion of ambitious free trade negotiations with important trading partners is also essential to increase market access for our exports. In the area of external policy, the Commission needs to develop a more coherent economic diplomacy that is responsive to the international business activities of European companies in areas ranging from investment to CSR activities.

Europe's social and economic model, alongside a vibrant single market, a well-functioning monetary union and solid external relations, offers a strong base for turning current challenges into opportunities for development.

In the new EU institutional framework – if the Lisbon treaty is ratified as we hope – the Commission will also need to work more closely with the European Parliament. With the scope for co-decision significantly enhanced, new ways of effectively governing the EU and its institutions will need to be found. The Commission will play a central role in this regard.

I wish you all the best in your meetings with the European Parliament. The European Union needs experience and political leadership from the next Commission and its President along the lines defined above.

Yours sincerely,

Jürgen R. Thumann
President

Philippe de Buck
Director General