



31 may 2012

### **BUSINESSMED GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING IN BRUSSELS 30 MAY 2012**

#### **Message to BUSINESSMED:**

- Thank you for inviting BUSINESSEUROPE to the lunch, it is an honour for me to meet with the respective members of the Southern Mediterranean countries.
- BUSINESSEUROPE is very pleased to have been able to host the General Assembly at our venue.
- BUSINESSEUROPE and BUSINESSMED have closely worked together in the past on various joint declarations to promote trade and investment between the EU and the Southern Mediterranean.
- In addition BUSINESSEUROPE's social department has been in contact with BUSINESSMED and its members to discuss issues related to youth employment, education and social dialogue.
- BUSINESSEUROPE has always encouraged a strong grouping of the various employer federations in the Southern Mediterranean to allow you to speak in one voice and present a united front.
- We are happy to see that BUSINESSMED has come out stronger following the democratic changes in many of your countries and is active and engaged on the pressing economic issues in the region.
- We think there is a lot of opportunity for the Southern Mediterranean to develop and prosper. We are encouraged by the Arab Spring to see your countries move forward and engage the potential of skills and people.
- Europe is facing a crisis and we need strong trade partners, especially our neighbours just to the south. A huge trade block of over 700 million people will bring benefits to both sides.
- BUSINESSEUROPE would like to be engaged, through projects and possibly through "Invest in Med II" (granted that the Commission green-lights it), with the Southern Mediterranean employer organisations.
- BUSINESSEUROPE has good experiences organising important events in the BOSMIP projects in the Western Balkans and Turkey to transfer know-how and expertise on *EU regulations and* related business issues.
- This will be increasingly important for the Southern Mediterranean as the European Commission is planning to negotiate deep and comprehensive free trade agreements which will incorporate aspects of EU legislation.
- We look forward to working with you on these issues.



**Message to Catherine Ashton**

- BUSINESSEUROPE would like to support BUSINESSMED and our partners in the Southern Mediterranean and thank you for your efforts to promoting peace and development in the region and supporting the Arab Spring efforts.
- BUSINESSEUROPE is happy to see that the External Action Service is developing into a strong organisation that promotes the values of Europe and presents a positive vision for the future.
- BUSINESSEUROPE hopes that business can build a strong partnership with the EEAS in the future to develop a strong external policy which guarantees European values and promotes a positive business climate for trade and investment.
- BUSINESSEUROPE thinks that business can be a force for good and, through trade and investment, mutually benefit the EU and its trading partners.
- We think there could be a great role of mutual cooperation between the EEAS, the European delegations and European companies active in third countries.
- We look forward to working more with you and with the EEAS and the European Commission.

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