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EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS HAVE JOINT RESPONSIBILITY IN INCREASING EUROPE'S COMPETITIVENESS

"Employers share the concern of the European Trade Union Confederation that the main problem in Europe is that we don't have growth. This raises serious questions about the financial sustainability of our social systems. If we want to preserve them, we need growth to create jobs and finance social security in the long run. Therefore I urge the trade unions to support BUSINESSEUROPE and its member federations' efforts to increase their competitiveness and reindustrialise Europe" – said Markus Beyrer, Director General of BUSINESSEUROPE.

He was speaking in Madrid today at a conference celebrating the 40th anniversary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC). Director General Markus Beyrer welcomed the opportunity to address the conference, stressing that employers and trade unions have a great, shared responsibility to contribute to Europe's economic success and social development in the future.

Europe faces fundamental challenges, especially in the form of increasingly fierce global competition, the ageing population and low productivity growth on European labour markets. Increasing Europe's competitiveness to boost growth and jobs calls for bold actions and structural reforms, notably to put in place dynamic, open and mobile labour markets.

The European social model is not gone with the crisis. Europe spends 50 per cent of government expenditure in the redistribution of income through social transfers. This figure has increased during the last years despite necessary fiscal consolidation efforts. For 7% of the world population and 20% of the world GDP, we spend 56% of international public spending on social protection.

NOTE TO THE EDITOR

BUSINESSEUROPE represents small, medium and large companies. Active in European affairs since 1958, BUSINESSEUROPE's members are 41 leading industrial and employers' federations from 35 European countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe. For the full list of our members, please visit our website.

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