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Preliminary reaction to the triggering of Article 50

The UK has now notified officially its decision to leave the European Union and triggered article 50. BusinessEurope stands ready to play a constructive role in the search of solutions to establish a sound and balanced new model for EU-UK relations. From a business perspective and if possible these solutions should be as close as possible to the existing situation.

The European Union needs a strong United Kingdom and the United Kingdom needs a strong European Union in order to pursue mutually beneficial relations in the future. The decision of the UK to leave the EU opens up factors of uncertainty. It is therefore, essential to organise the exit of the UK from the EU in an orderly and constructive manner.

A significant part of EU and UK jobs depend on exports and production processes are profoundly inter-twined across the wider Europe. The creation of unnecessary obstacles to trade and investment as well as of unfair conditions of competition should be avoided.

BusinessEurope and its member federations urge the negotiators to ensure that the new model that will govern EU-UK relations after Brexit is in line with the following principles:

- It preserves the integrity of the Single Market based on its four freedoms;
- It maintains as close economic relations as possible between the EU and the UK;
- It organises a smooth transition towards a future trade agreement, to allow business to prepare and adjust to the new situation;
- It mitigates the adverse effects of Brexit for companies and citizens;
- It provides legal certainty as soon as possible by delivering achievable solutions in a reasonable and predictable period of time.
- Discussions must involve all relevant stakeholders in order to properly tackle all relevant issues including customs duties and procedures, market access and regulatory convergence.

It is in the interest of both the European Union and the United Kingdom to pursue mutually beneficial relations in the future, in a level playing field environment. The exit of the UK from the EU must be smooth. Negotiations should be led in a true spirit of partnership and mutual loyalty.

Negotiators must avoid any ambiguity about the commitment to free trade on both sides and access to the EU single market should be based on the right balance between rights and obligations.

The future relationship between the UK and EU must be based on reciprocity with the UK having the rights and obligations of a non-EU member. The best trade agreements are not stuck in time, so we favour an agreement that adjusts to changes in the long-term partnership between the EU and UK.