



06.07.2018

### **PRESIDENTIAL RECEPTION 12 JULY 2018 CHATEAU STE ANNE**

#### **SPEECH BY EMMA MARCEGAGLIA, OUTGOING PRESIDENT OF BUSINESSEUROPE**

Dear Vice-President Katainen,  
Dear Pierre (Gattaz),  
Dear Ambassadors, Dear members of the European Parliament,  
Dear Directors General and friends from the European Commission and Council,  
Dear Presidents and Directors General of member federations,  
Dear friends and partners of BusinessEurope,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am really pleased that you were able to join us today. We organised this reception because I wanted to thank you personally for five wonderful years working with all of you. And also to celebrate the start of the mandate of my good friend Pierre Gattaz who succeeded me a few days ago.

When I was first elected (back in 2013), I promised to make BUSINESSSEUROPE an outspoken organisation and I was very clear on my vision of Europe:

- **No nationalism.** Together we are stronger and no one can do well in the medium term if the others are struggling,
- **Growth and jobs** must be our priority. And for that, we need sound public finances, structural reforms but also more focus on investment.
- **Competitiveness** (and industrial competitiveness in particular) is key because it is the basis for growth and job creation in all economic sectors.

I am particularly grateful to Vice-President Katainen for the work he did (and still does!) on the European investment plan, on globalisation and on industrial competitiveness.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The circumstances of my Presidency were not easy.

We had to deal with well-known challenges such as digitalisation and remaining obstacles in the Single Market, to name just two. And in addition, my presidency was marked by a series of unprecedented events: the Euro crisis, migration challenges, tragic terrorist attacks, the decision of the UK to leave the EU, and more recently drastic unilateral decisions by the US, a key ally and trading partner!



But there were also many rewarding and happy moments, where I felt that the work we were doing all together made a real difference. For example:

- The commitment shown to our European values – together with our social partners on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaties in Rome and with our own members at the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of BusinessEurope,
- The ratification of the EU-Canada agreement (CETA) and its provisional application after a real saga which almost derailed the best trade agreement we ever signed!,
- The acceptance by both the UK and the EU of the need to include a transition period in the future withdrawal agreement on Brexit. BusinessEurope and CBI worked so hard to get this point across!

We made progress and if we can expect 2.4% of growth in the EU in 2018 and 2.3% in the Euro area, it is because necessary reforms were made. But there is still a lot to do.

Further progress will largely depend on the capacity of Member States to put and keep their house in order. Doing so is essential. In our European Union when one member makes mistakes, it can weaken all the others! But of course, taking the right decisions at EU level is absolutely crucial. You have often heard me saying this because I really believe it: together we are stronger! But this unity must lead to real actions!

On the strengthening of the European Economic and Monetary Union, progress is too slow. The results of the last European Council meeting show it. And this only partly due to the fact that a lot of time was spent on avoiding a total deadlock on migration.

Another point of concern is the lack of progress in Brexit negotiations. The political breakthrough made in December 2017 and March this year must be translated in an agreement on a legal text by October at the latest. And companies need clarity as soon as possible, on future relations in order to avoid a cliff edge!

Dear Pierre,

I am afraid that your mandate will not be easier than mine but I am delighted to leave BusinessEurope in your capable hands because I know you share the convictions I just expressed.

I know that you have the support of all member federations and that you will also be able to rely on the competent advice of Markus and his team to build on what we have achieved all together during the last 5 years.

I know you will defend clear positions on what needs to be done to ensure that Europe remains one of the best places to live and work in the world and wish you a lot of success in this very important task.