

**4 December 1998**

## **UNICE AND UEAPME SIGN CO-OPERATION AGREEMENT**

Today, 4 December 1998, Mr G. Jacobs, President of UNICE and Mr J. Kamminga, President of UEAPME, agreed to strengthen co-operation between the two European organisations in the social dialogue.

President Kamminga and President Jacobs said: "The treaty on the European Union foresees a strong role for social partners in the development of social policy at European level. We both believe that it is desirable to join forces in defending the interests of European companies in the social dialogue. We agreed that co-operation should be based on mutual recognition, trust and good faith".

"We have signed today a co-operation agreement between UNICE and UEAPME. All employers representatives will have the same rights in preparatory meetings of the employers but no one has a veto. We agreed to always use our best endeavours to reach consensus on the positions to be defended in the social dialogue while fully respecting the autonomy of the two European organisations. UNICE, as leader for the employers' side, undertook to consult UEAPME prior to expressing positions on behalf of employers in negotiations or other meetings of the European social dialogue. The common aim of UNICE and UEAPME is to defend the interests of companies and to help establishing a framework conducive to competitiveness, growth and employment" concluded Mr Jacobs and Mr Kamminga.

---

For further information, please call : Dirk F. Hudig (32 2 237.65.01) or Thérèse de Lidekerke (32 2 237.65.30)