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**UNICE URGES MEMBER STATES TO ADOPT A MORE CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDE
TOWARDS THE CREATION OF A COMMUNITY PATENT**

The Stockholm Summit failed to make a breakthrough on the Community patent. UNICE reiterates its concerns about the lack of tangible progress on this crucial issue.

The current system for obtaining and maintaining patents in Europe is less supportive of innovation than in the USA and Japan in terms of time and costs. The average cost of patenting an invention in eight countries in Europe is Euro 30,000 (of which almost 40% is taken up by translations), compared with Euro 5,000 in the US. The current legal arrangements are also a hurdle standing in the way of companies wanting to reap the fruits of their R&D activities, and in particular SMEs.

Appropriate steps were taken at the Lisbon Summit by making adoption of a Community Patent a top priority to be delivered by end-2001. Nevertheless, since then progress remains insufficient to ensure adoption of the needed instrument by the deadline set at Lisbon. UNICE calls upon Member States to transform the Lisbon declarations into action by supporting the Commission proposal.

Without a strong commitment from EU Member States to set up the framework needed by companies in the field of patents, the EU will fail to provide European inventors with tools comparable to those available to their main competitors in Japan or the USA.

In this context, UNICE urges Member States to adopt a more constructive approach to allow rapid progress on this dossier.

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