

# UNICE

THE VOICE OF BUSINESS IN EUROPE

On. Cav. Lav. Dott. Silvio BERLUSCONI  
Presidente del Consiglio dei Ministri  
Palazzo Chigi  
Piazza Colonna, 370

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THE PRESIDENT

Dear Sir,

On the eve of the opening of the Intergovernmental Conference convened to adopt a Constitution for the European Union, UNICE would like to share with you the viewpoint of business.

UNICE is the official voice of more than 16 million small, medium and large companies active in Europe. UNICE's members are 35 central industrial and employers federations from 28 countries, working together to achieve growth and competitiveness in Europe.

UNICE supports the need for the basic values of the EU (principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights, diversity, fundamental freedoms, respect for the rule of law, and social and economic cohesion) to remain the underlying basis of any further European integration.

Thanks to its observer status in the Convention, UNICE was able to contribute actively to the debate that has taken place over the last eighteen months and to promote the position of business.

For the first time at EU level, a genuinely participative review of the Treaty has taken place, in which national governments, national parliaments, the European Parliament, the European Commission, social partners and representatives of organised civil society were represented. Business has very much supported this method which has opened-up the debate to all stakeholders in a transparent way. The outcome of the Convention is a compromise achieved in a real European spirit and, consequently, is a good basis for the IGC's work.

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The IGC must deliver a Constitution that provides a supportive business environment, in which companies, as the engines of economic growth and employment, can compete on a level playing-field, prosper and adapt to the challenges that globalisation brings.

In this context, business calls upon the IGC to ensure that the guiding principle for shaping tomorrow's Europe are a commitment to meet the following four objectives:

- Strengthening European competitiveness, adaptability to structural change and improvement of employment prospects;
- Strengthening Europe's economies and full realisation of EMU's potential;
- Ensuring an efficient decision-making process in the EU;
- Strengthening Europe's hand on the international stage.

What business expects from a European constitution is a balanced set of objectives for the EU, well-defined policies and competences as well as efficient decision-making structures that contribute to a solid and predictable business environment.

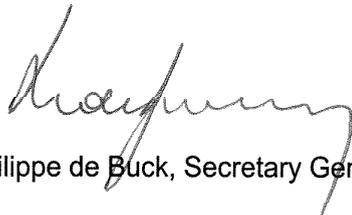
UNICE has devoted a great deal of effort in particular to ensuring that the competitiveness of the EU is referred as a general objective of the Treaty. This was achieved during the Convention and it must be preserved by the IGC.

As a social partner, it is also key for UNICE that the IGC confirms the Convention proposal to have a stronger recognition in the Constitution of the autonomy of social partners and social dialogue.

The Constitution that will be adopted by the IGC is key to the future of Europe and for its competitiveness and, in this context, we trust very much that you will take on board business comments during your discussions.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of Jürgen Strube, President



Philippe de Buck, Secretary General