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15 December 2008

SEMINAR ON THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY, 15 DECEMBER 2008

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

PHILIPPE DE BUCK, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF BUSINESSEUROPE

Dear Professor Schuurmans,

Dear Mr Kjaergaard,

Dear Members,

A few weeks after the first stakeholders' seminar of the European Institute for Innovation and Technology organised in Bratislava, I am pleased to welcome Professor Schuurmans for an exchange of views with BUSINESSEUROPE on recent and future developments regarding the EIT.

BUSINESSEUROPE has been active in the design and implementation of the EIT since the very first steps. In May 2007, in a letter to European Commission President Barroso, BUSINESSEUROPE's President Seillière restated our support to the EIT. We do believe that the EIT can "be a means of bridging the innovation gap between Europe and its competitors strengthening knowledge transfer by fostering partnerships between academia, research institutes and business specifically aiming at creating innovations".

In a position paper entitled "Views on the EIT" we published in March 2007, we stressed that "the EIT needs to create poles of excellence that directly contribute to more innovation and thereby more growth and jobs". This remains a major priority for us today.

We are following, with close attention, the shaping of the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs).

BUSINESSEUROPE was pleased to support your candidacy as a member of the Governing Board, Professor Schuurmans. I offer you all my congratulations on your election to the Chairmanship of the EIT.



We are certain that our cooperation with you will be fruitful and that the EIT, based on the active involvement of business, will be the success it is planned to be. In view of this, the participation of companies in KICs should be encouraged by:

- Avoiding any complex and time-consuming procedures (in particular regarding the call for proposals, which should be based on a single-step procedure) and in general, no excessive bureaucracy
- Clarifying the role of business in financing KICs
- Setting up a motivating intellectual property rights policy
- Shaping flexible KICs.

Another issue we would like to address today is the coordination of KICs with other EU instruments and initiatives. The EIT needs to provide clear linkage between its strategic objectives and thematic priorities and those which have developed from initiatives such as the Joint Technology Initiatives, clusters and lead markets.

Thank you.
