

EUROCHAMBRES outlines business priorities to Danish Presidency

In a meeting in Copenhagen with senior representatives of the Danish Government, including Pia Olsen Dyhr, Minister for Trade and Investment and Acting Minister for Health, EUROCHAMBRES' President Alessandro Barberis highlighted three specific aims that the Danish Presidency should focus on in its efforts to develop a more favourable business environment.

- **Free Trade Agreements** – Ongoing trade negotiations (India, Mercosur, etc.) must be concluded provided they can make a tangible difference for business: a significant reduction of tariffs and non tariff barriers, including all sectors (e.g. services and public procurement) and provide for “safer” trade (protection of Intellectual Property Rights). If the offer is not comprehensive enough, the EU should not (yet) sign. Besides trade negotiations, EUROCHAMBRES also stressed the importance of facilitating access to foreign markets for European companies and highlighted the Chambers' role in this respect.
- **Patents** – The Presidency should drive the Council over the final hurdle of the European Patent discussions, and every opportunity should be taken to capitalise on the new Italian government's more constructive attitude on the dossier.
- **Access to finance** – Mr Barberis praised the recent proposal to enhance the capacity of banks to lend to small businesses by devoting unallocated EU budget funds to leveraging the European Investment Bank's financing capacity, and presented EUROCHAMBRES' initiative to establish a European Central Guarantee Fund for loans and equity.

“It is clear that the Danish Presidency tenure comes at a critical moment for the EU and that economic governance and resolving the sovereign debt and euro crises will be a dominant theme for months to come,” said Mr Barberis. *“Nonetheless, the Danish Presidency must not lose sight of the fact that it is ultimately businesses that will create the wealth and jobs needed to reboot Europe's economy; they should thus ensure that EU policies reflect their needs and support their ambitions.”*

Further information: Mr Arnaldo Abruzzini, Tel. +32 2 282 08 52, abruzzo@eurochambres.eu
Press contact: Ms Guendalina Cominotti, Tel. +32 2 282 08 66, cominotti@eurochambres.eu
All our press releases can be downloaded from www.eurochambres.eu/content/default.asp?PageID=153