

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **Happy Birthday to EU!** **EUROCHAMBRES' wishes to the European Union**

For EUROCHAMBRES, the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Treaty of Rome is a unique opportunity to remind citizens of the considerable progress achieved by the European Union since its inception in terms of stability, democracy, prosperity. It is also the right time to give a new impetus to European integration, which has been stagnating since some Member States rejected the Constitution.

Fifty years after the Treaty of Rome, new challenges have emerged: globalisation, the speed up of technological change, the ageing population, climate change and finite energy resources. These new challenges and the expectations they create in the minds of enterprises and citizens require a strong response from the EU.

What Chambers of Commerce and their member enterprises want above all is a powerful, competitive, efficient Europe that is secure in terms of energy.

- **powerful**, because in a globalised world, the EU must consolidate its role within international economic and political institutions. Member States must present a united front if we want the EU position to be heard. Indisputably an economic power, Europe must also be respected politically.
- **competitive**, because given the technological progress of the United States and the labour costs of emerging economies, Europe must support a more ambitious research and development policy, strengthen its education and training policy. Entrepreneurial behaviour must be promoted and rewarded; the fiscal, legal and administrative environment for enterprises – SMEs in particular – must be improved and the potentialities of the Internal Market fully exploited.
- **efficient**, because in a constantly-changing world, the EU must ensure without delay that it has reactive institutions, and a rapid and transparent decision-making process based on a representative system of consultations. Efficiency also implies that the Union acts proportionately, with a minimum of bureaucracy and only where it is the best actor.
- **secure in terms of energy**, for the energy factor is essential in economic development and will no doubt become one of the most important factors in the coming decades. The EU must go further than simply ensure the smooth running of the internal energy market. Europe's energy supplies should be diversified. This implies avoiding strong dependencies, the ability to tackle climate change and to anticipate the exhaustion of non-renewable energy sources.

**Page 1 of 2**

EUROCHAMBRES – The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents 46 members, a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers with over 19 million member enterprises in Europe.

EUROCHAMBRES' President Pierre Simon urges European leaders not to yield to the temptation of reaching an agreement based on the "lowest-common denominator". *"The Declaration that Heads of State and Government will adopt in Berlin is essential. It must contain the seeds of an ambitious European project and be imbued with values and objectives that are capable of attracting the support of 489 million citizens. Failing to do so would plunge the Union back into stagnation, with detrimental effects on European economy and on the well-being of European citizens,"* he said.

**The full EUROCHAMBRES' Declaration on the occasion of the 50 Years of the EU can be downloaded from [http://eurochambres.eu/PDF/pdf\\_general/070321-Declaration50YearsEU\\_EN.pdf](http://eurochambres.eu/PDF/pdf_general/070321-Declaration50YearsEU_EN.pdf)**

-----

FURTHER INFORMATION: Mr. Arnaldo Abruzzini, tel.: +32 2-282 08 51, [abruzzo@eurochambres.eu](mailto:abruzzo@eurochambres.eu)  
PRESS CONTACT: Ms. Guendalina Cominotti, tel.: +32 2-282 08 66, [cominotti@eurochambres.eu](mailto:cominotti@eurochambres.eu)

All our press releases can be downloaded from: <http://www.eurochambres.eu/press/>