

PRESS RELEASE

EU-Russia Summit: EUROCHAMBRES suggests 4 points of focus

Ahead of this week's EU-Russia Summit in Sochi, EUROCHAMBRES calls upon negotiators to focus on four key points of discussion in order to put EU-Russia relations in gear and drive towards a more concrete and business friendly environment.

1. Energy – Quid pro quo is key

With energy dominating EU-Russia trade relations, EUROCHAMBRES calls for an approach based on reciprocity: the outflows of energy from Russia should be matched by inflows of EU capital and technology. A necessary prerequisite for this is the reinforcement of rule of law and administrative procedures in Russia. Further, European and Russian business communities ought to sit at the negotiation table, in order to create a favourable and competitive environment for companies.

2. Security – The private sector as an ally against terrorism

As EC President Barroso stated: *"The effective and efficient fight against terrorism requires cooperation with the private sector."** EUROCHAMBRES encourages the launch of public-private partnerships, as the involvement of the business community is crucial to face cross-border terrorist threats without impeding legitimate trade.

3. European Neighbourhood Policy – What implications for Russia?

Clarifications are needed regarding the implications for Russia of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). It would be important for Russian involvement in the ENPI to be an integral part of the EU foreign policy. Business-focused programmes with Russia would contribute to the stabilisation of EU-Russia relations, and to the overall economic growth in both regions.

4. Road Maps – The business community can boost their implementation

EUROCHAMBRES insists on the importance of being able to participate in pertinent EU-Russia "dialogues" and contribute to the reviews of the progress made in implementing the Road Maps. These provide European and Russian businesses with a unique opportunity to enhance their cooperation in the interest of both parties.

* José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, speaking at the Third Worldwide Security Conference, 21-23 February, Brussels (Belgium).

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EUROCHAMBRES has member organisations in 44 countries representing a network of 2,000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member companies.