

# PRESS RELEASE

## CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY – BUSINESS NETWORKS ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN COMMISSION'S EUROPEAN MULTISTAKEHOLDER FORUM

A coalition of business network organisations comprising of the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), CSR Europe and EUROCHAMBRES (the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry), have taken the decision to fully participate at today's European Multistakeholder Forum progress meeting on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

At this progress meeting, business networks together with other stakeholders; the European Commission, Employers, Governments, Trade Unions and Academics, want to demonstrate in a fully transparent manner that CSR is becoming an integrated activity for many companies. This is in direct response to market demand for responsible business conduct which must continuously seek to improve best practices.

At the European Multistakeholder Forum two years ago, nine recommendations were agreed upon. Since then, business has embarked upon numerous voluntary activities to implement these recommendations. The European Commission's preparatory publication of the "Compendium of Actions taken by Stakeholders" is concrete evidence of the extensive work done in this area by companies and other stakeholders in the last two years. ERT, CSR Europe and EUROCHAMBRES strongly believe that this approach continues to be the best method to deal with the broad nature of CSR issues. We are convinced that companies, as well as societies, benefit from this horizontal, global, and targeted approach.

The Commission itself has defined CSR as "*a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis*". We continue to support the Commission in its current approach on CSR and its follow up to the Forum recommendations. ERT, CSR Europe and EUROCHAMBRES remain receptive to further collaboration with all stakeholders in the future. We believe that meaningful dialogue at every level is the way forward on CSR issues. Together with the business-led European Alliance for CSR, this sets the right direction to achieving real results.

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## **More about the organisations**

### **ERT**

*ERT consists of around 45 CEOs and chairmen of major multinational companies of European parentage in a wide range of industrial sectors. Their combined turnover is €1,500 billion employing about 4.5 million people worldwide. ERT advocates policies, at both national and European levels, which help create conditions necessary to improve European growth and jobs.*

### **EUROCHAMBRES**

*The Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry represents 46 members (45 national associations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry and 1 Trans-national Chamber Organisation), a European network of 2000 regional and local Chambers with over 18 million member enterprises in Europe.*

### **CSR Europe**

*CSR Europe is the leading European business network for corporate social responsibility with over 65 leading multinational corporations and 22 National Partner Organisations as members. Since its inception in 1995 by the then European Commission President Jacques Delors and leading European companies, the mission of CSR Europe has been to help companies integrate corporate social responsibility (CSR) into the way they do business, every day. Today, the companies that make up CSR Europe are at the forefront of CSR globally and contributing in setting the agenda for responsible and competitive business in Europe. CSR Europe has become an inspiring network of business people throughout Europe, willing to exchange business best practices and solutions in an innovative and enriching environment.*

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