

28 September 2009

Mr José Manuel Barroso
President
European Commission
1049 Brussels
Belgium

Dear President Barroso,

On behalf of EUROCHAMBRES, the European association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry, I would like to congratulate you on your reappointment as President of the European Commission. During your first term, the European Commission demonstrated a clear appreciation of the needs and challenges of the business community, as well as its pivotal role as a catalyst for growth. We look to you to ensure that this pattern is maintained as Europe continues its recovery from the economic crisis and puts in place the building blocks for longer term prosperity and sustainability.

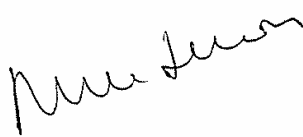
I take this opportunity to enclose our new publication, 'Innovate to Grow: EU Priorities for the New Political Term', which sets out the elements that Chamber network and its 20 million business members believe to be key to European growth. As you will see, there is significant correlation with the priorities you set out to the European Parliament earlier this month. The challenge of course arises in converting these priorities into actions that are of maximum added value to the EU.

Rather than attempt to address in this letter a wide range of issues to be tackled in the coming five years, I will simply comment on the broad matter of competitiveness. When you re-launched the Lisbon Strategy in 2005, you emphasised the importance of focusing on growth and jobs. EUROCHAMBRES of course recognises the significance of the social and environmental pillars. Indeed, Chambers deliver vocational training to millions of employees every year and act as the first port of call for many thousands of SMEs seeking intelligent energy solutions. Notwithstanding this, we firmly believe that a healthy and growing economy, based on a thriving, innovative and flexible SME community, is a pre-requisite to European environmental and social sustainability. I therefore urge you to maintain the focus on growth and jobs as the post 2010 Lisbon Strategy is put in place.

You will recall that in October 2008, we shared the platform with President Pöttering for the first edition of EUROCHAMBRES' European Parliament of Enterprises. This event was a tremendous success and a very good example of how the EU institutions can engage its citizens directly in their work. Preparations for the second edition, in late 2010, are already under way and I very much hope that you will once again be able to take part.

My term as President of EUROCHAMBRES concludes at the end of the year. My successor, who will be elected in mid-October, will certainly be in contact with you shortly thereafter. Meanwhile I remain at your disposal to provide input on your work and assure you of EUROCHAMBRES' commitment to engage ever more effectively with the European Commission and other institutions.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pierre Simon', written in a cursive style.

Pierre Simon

ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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