



## **“The voice of SMEs in Europe”**

### **Press Statement**

FOR IMMEDIATE ISSUE

### **Berlin declaration must give new momentum to the European Union**

**Brussels, 26 March 2007.** UEAPME, the European craft and SME employers’ organisation, welcomed the “Berlin declaration” signed yesterday (Sunday) by the Presidents of the European Council, Parliament and Commission on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signature of the Treaty of Rome. According to UEAPME, the text is an excellent summary of Europe’s past achievements, and a memento to Member States of the importance of good collaboration and common ideals in consolidating the Union’s internal development and bringing concrete answers to citizens’ concerns.

*“The Berlin declaration rightly reminds us once again that the challenges Europe faces today do not stop at national borders”,* said UEAPME Secretary General **Hans-Werner Müller**. *“The European Union is the sole response in this respect, as long as all Member States put their weight behind it and keep supporting and improving the ‘unique way of living and working together’ that made the EU so successful in the past 50 years”,* he continued.

UEAPME particularly appreciated the references made in the declaration to growth, employment and social cohesion. Improving the EU’s economic outlook is the key to win back citizens’ confidence, the organisation had warned last week. UEAPME was also pleased about the wording of the declaration on energy policy, and called once more on Member States to leave national interests behind and support the creation a truly functioning internal market in the sector.

Finally, UEAPME fully backed the commitment set in the Berlin declaration to “renew the political shape of Europe” before 2009. *“A union of 27 Member States is a success story and a governance challenge at the same time. This is why we believe that the European Union needs an updated and workable framework to keep pace with its growth and carry on delivering for the years to come”,* concluded Mr Müller.

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**EDITORS’ NOTE:** UEAPME is the employers’ organisation representing crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 81 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across Europe, covering over 11 million enterprises with 50 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner.

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