

Mr Nicolas Sarkozy
Président of the European Union
Président de la République
Palais de l'Elysée
55 Rue du Faubourg St Honoré
F-75008 Paris
FRANCE

Brussels, 3 July 2008

Re: Success in the WTO Negotiations is crucial for the EU services economy

Dear President,

The European Services Forum (ESF) is a network of high-level representatives of the European services sectors committed to promoting the interests of European firms and the liberalisation of markets worldwide through WTO negotiations. ESF membership includes companies and federations covering more than 80% of exporting service sectors in the EU, including financial, tourism, telecommunications, maritime transport, business and professional, distribution, postal and express delivery, IT, construction and the audio-visual services.

ESF welcome the fact that WTO Director General Pascal Lamy has convened a WTO Ministerial Meeting in Geneva in the week of 21st July 2008. The Doha Round negotiations need to move urgently towards a conclusion, with a wider focus that must include better access to the main overseas markets for European services. If there is to be liberalisation in agriculture and manufacturing tariffs - and ESF supports both - there must also be comparable progress in services. There must be a balanced outcome, and therefore any breakthrough in Geneva must have strong and clear political commitments to real liberalisation in the services sector.

Europe depends on services for employment and for its external trade. Today, more than 60% of jobs in the EU are in its rapidly growing private services sector. In most large companies represented in the ESF, about two jobs in ten are devoted to exports or overseas investment. Service exports are increasingly important to the EU economy. In 2006, Europe's international trade in services recorded a surplus of 68.5 billion euros. Over two thirds of our foreign investment is in services.

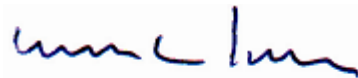
Our companies look for success in the WTO negotiations as a tool to provide them with better access to the fast-growing markets of emerging countries, and with better legal security for their investments abroad.

Some improvements in the existing schedule of commitments have been already tabled, reflecting concrete progress in more than 200 sub sectors of major services sectors. But this is not sufficient. The revised offers we seek from our trading partners should include both the binding of existing levels of openness, and concrete new business opportunities.

The European services business community urges you, as current President of the European Union, and your heads of governments and ministerial colleagues to do all you can to ensure a success of the ministerial meeting in Geneva later this month, especially in securing firm indications of liberalisation from the signalling conference on services which the Commission has rightly championed, and thus to create the momentum for completing a successful Doha Round by the end of the year.

I am writing in similar terms to Heads of Government and Trade Ministers of the EU 27 Member States.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Christoffer Taxell', written in a cursive style.

Christoffer Taxell
Chairman of the ESF