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- Informs Czech businesses about EU legislation affecting them
- Trains Czech entrepreneurs and managers in Brussels
- Represents Czech business associations at European business federations

PRESS RELEASE

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Will 2011 be a Good Year for International Trade and for Doha?!?

EU trade is an engine for global growth. It contributes to creation of sustainable jobs and has a real impact on the day to day lives of people and businesses. The European Union is the biggest global player in international trade and investment. However, the EU is challenged by a changing world and has to maintain and improve its leading position. On 9 November 2010 the European Commission presented its renewed Trade Strategy focusing on removing persistent barriers mainly via achieving on-going multilateral and bilateral trade deals and looking for new ways to work with main EU trade partners. Over 40 representatives of European institutions, Member States and business sector, gathered to discuss Commission's paper two days after it had been released and agreed that the strategy reflects their main concerns, however it lacks concrete measures to achieve these ambitious goals.

H.E. Milena VICENOVÁ, Czech Permanent Representative to the EU, opened the debate and stressed the importance of the EU trade. "Trade is a key pillar of our growth, especially in the time of economic recovery. Value of EU trade has been growing by 75% over the last ten years, however in five years time, 90% of the world growth will be generated outside Europe, with a third from China alone. It is a challenge for Europe to remain the number one economy", said VICENOVÁ.

The new Trade Strategy was presented as a starting point of the discussion by **Matthew BALDWIN**, Director for Market Access and Industry of the Commission's DG for Trade. BALDWIN stressed the importance of public consultations preceding the EC Communication and its close link to the EU 2020 Strategy. A key priority of the Strategy is to conclude on-going negotiations at multilateral and bilateral level. "Europe wants to conclude the Doha round as soon as possible, and 2011 should be a good year to achieve this goal", said BALDWIN. "Global trade is not static but changing, Europe has to focus even more on the protection of IPR, investment, regulatory issues, market access public procurement and the synergy between our single market and what we are doing externally", added BALDWIN. In 2011, the Commission will report to the European Spring Council its first annual report on trade barriers. Mrs. **Anna TELIČKOVÁ**, Director of Multilateral and Common Trade Policy Dept of the Czech Ministry of Industry and Trade stressed the importance of trade liberalization for small export-oriented economies. Exports share 77% of the Czech GDP. "From first glance our expectations are taken into account as it ensures continuity, predictability, transparency, coordination and strengthens the EU brand", highlighted TELIČKOVÁ. She added that the Czechs appreciated the way how the trade policy should be shaped from now on. This task includes cooperation with stakeholders, smart administration and efficient interaction among EU institutions.

Various stakeholders, namely business organisations, have been active in this policy field for a long time. "For many years, BUSINESSEUROPE has been promoting ideas contained in today's EC Communication and it looks forward for their full implementation," said **Adrian VAN DEN HOVEN**, Director of International Relations Department of BUSINESSEUROPE. Economic crisis had severe impact on trade and balance of powers. BUSINESSEUROPE welcomes strong focus of the Communication on emerging countries but is critical to the WTO role being a little bit out of touch of business. VAN DEN HOVEN also stressed the importance of a dialogue with and between European and foreign business representatives in the world who can speed up negotiations and achieve a "win-win situation", especially on sector basis. "The communication provides a useful narrative for trade that the current economic climate desperately needs, according to **Hosuk LEE-MAKIYAMA**, Co-Director of ECIPE - European Centre for International Political Economy. He urges for a focus on delivery – first, in the bilaterals and then WTO. Priority should be put on engaging the big trading partners (A new strategy on China, FTA with US, Japan), and then on a post-Doha agenda. He called Doha "yesterday's solutions to yesterday's problems" and welcomed ITA-expansion with NTBs but with addition of services, and proposed also a plurilateral on services. He further stressed the important link between internal and external liberalisation, and that biggest gains in trade are from imports – he also warned against trade policy becoming increasingly fragmented or subordinated to social policy agendas."

The event was organised by CEBRE and Czech Permanent Representation to the EU in cooperation with Confederation of Employers' and Entrepreneurs' Associations of CR as a part of the project "Round Tables on Promoting Czech Foreign Policy Priorities" supported by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For more information see www.cebrecz.cz/docs/tradepolicy or contact Michal Kadera, Director of CEBRE at Michal.Kadera@cebrecz.cz.

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