



CSR Europe launches toolbox for responsible business

Brussels, 4 December 2008 – The 80 member companies of CSR Europe launch today a Toolbox for a Competitive and Responsible Europe at its 'Equipped for CSR' event in Brussels. Keynote speeches will be held by European Commissioners Günter Verheugen and Vladimir Spidla who stress that the European Commission sees CSR of crucial importance for a competitive and sustainable Europe. This event links practical tools for responsible business with these strategic European goals.

CSR Europe's Toolbox contains a set of practical tools for companies to gain competitive advantage through responsible business practices. The tools are the result of a series of business-stakeholder cooperation projects, known as CSR Laboratories, coordinated by CSR Europe and its partner organisations throughout Europe. The Toolbox includes guides, research reports, online resources and collaborative network models on issues such as reducing the environmental impact of industrial products and processes, promoting employee health and wellbeing in the workplace and addressing social and environmental issues across the supply chain. In 2009, CSR Europe and its 25 national partner organisations will test and further develop these tools in cooperation with more companies and stakeholders throughout Europe.

"Today's complex socio-economic and environmental challenges require joint and concrete action from companies, governments and the civil society," said Viscount **Etienne Davignon**, Vice President Suez-Tractebel and President of CSR Europe. "The challenging economic situation only highlights the need for companies to develop CSR strategies and practices that are embedded in their operations and their interaction with stakeholders. New and sometimes unconventional business-stakeholder partnerships build mutual trust and drive sustainable growth," he added.

"Socially responsible businesses are good for our economy and important for our society. I continue to call on European companies to take a global lead on CSR," said **Günter Verheugen**, Vice President of the European Commission responsible for Enterprise and Industry, commenting on the findings of the latest annual European Competitiveness Report just released by the Commission. "Having been mainly a tool for risk and reputation management, I see CSR becoming an instrument for creating new value", he said, encouraging European companies of all sizes to join the European Alliance for CSR.

"We hope that the business tools and networks launched today inspire companies to further develop innovative CSR practices and integrate them into different business functions," said **Lettemieke Mulder**, Director External Affairs – Corporate Responsibility at Unilever and Chair of CSR Europe's Board of Directors.

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Please visit the Equipped for CSR' event live webcast from 13:30 to 14:30 CET
www.csreurope.org/toolbox

About CSR Europe

CSR Europe is the leading European business network for corporate social responsibility, with around 80 multinational corporations and 25 national partner organisations as members. The organisation was founded in 1995 in response to an appeal by the European Commission President Jacques Delors. CSR Europe's mission is to support member companies in integrating CSR into the way they do business, every day. www.csreurope.org



About the European Alliance for CSR

The European Alliance for CSR is an open partnership for enterprises and their stakeholders to promote CSR and support its integration into mainstream business practice. The Alliance was launched in March 2006 by the European business community with the strong backing of the European Commission. So far, more than 260 companies and organisations have expressed their support to the Alliance. CSR Europe is a key partner of the Alliance.

www.csreurope.org/alliance

About the Toolbox for a Competitive and Responsible Europe

CSR Europe's Toolbox for a Competitive and Responsible Europe is available online at www.csreurope.org/toolbox. In 2009, CSR Europe and partners will organise thematic events throughout Europe to test and further develop these tools in cooperation with companies and stakeholders. The new tools include guides, research reports, online resources and collaborative network models on issues such as:

- Reducing the environmental impact of industrial products and processes
- Fighting social and financial exclusion in disadvantaged communities
- Helping groups such as older workers, migrants and women to take up employment
- Building a skilled workforce for the knowledge economy
- Promoting employee health and wellbeing at the workplace
- Addressing social and environmental issues across the supply chain
- Demonstrating how responsible business practices can create long-term value

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