

THE DIRECTOR GENERAL

Commissioner Louis Michel
Development and Humanitarian Aid
European Commission
Rue de La Loi, 200
1049-Brussels

30 November 2008

Dear Commissioner,



BUSINESSEUROPE welcomes the Communication on raw materials in which the European Commission outlines an integrated strategy for securing reliable and undistorted access to raw materials. The initiative's three pillars, addressing access to raw materials from international markets, setting framework conditions in the EU and promoting resource efficiency and recycling, constitute a valuable first step to addressing this important issue.

The timely implementation of the initiative will be of key importance for ensuring reliable and undistorted access to raw materials. We therefore urge the Commission to pursue the actions outlined in the initiative's three pillars. We count on you to ensure that implementation of the proposed responses related to development policy are made a priority.

Although the Communication clearly states your commitment to good governance in developing countries, we believe development policy should take even greater account of the raw materials sector. This can be done by more actively supporting partner governments in improving governance of raw materials sector and by facilitating investment in infrastructure projects concentrated on natural resources.

EU development policy should also continue its dialogue with partner countries on debt reduction and encourage them not to resort to one-sided dependencies on large donor countries and new debt traps which undermine development objectives. The EU development policy should furthermore encourage other large donors to work on these principles.

European industry is convinced of the value of the raw materials initiative, but urges you to strengthen the contribution of development policy to this important issue. We look forward to being actively involved in the implementation of the raw materials initiative.

Yours sincerely,



Philippe de Buck

