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SME UNION President Leitl: Small Business Act is firm base and first step towards more serious European SME policy and must be put into practice as soon as possible!

„The European Small Business Act has the potential to finally change European SME policy. It includes essential ambitious demands of the SME UNION”, said SME UNION President Christoph Leitl after the adoption of the Small Business Act in the European Parliament plenary session in Strasbourg today. The SBA was one of the major demands of the SME “Low” Level Group to fight Administrative Burdens (LLG) which was set up by SME UNION, EUROCHAMBRES and JADE.

“For example the proposal of the European Private Company, as part of the SBA, will support internationally oriented SMEs saving time, money and red tape. This is of crucial importance in times of crisis where lots of SMEs are fighting against the unfavorable economic climate. The SBA will help them to emerge stronger from the crisis”, underlined SME UNION President Leitl.

Furthermore he pointed out the importance of the “Think Small First”-principle which is included irreversibly in EU legislation and administration with the SBA: “On the basis of the all-encompassing ‘Think Small First’ principle, any legal act will be drafted from the viewpoint of SMEs and meet the criteria of necessity, proportionality, ‘once only’ and subsidiarity.” President Leitl used this opportunity to thank EU Commission Vice-President and SME Commissioner Günter Verheugen, the SME Circle of the EPP-ED Group as well as all SME minded MEPs who supported our claims for the excellent cooperation giving hereby a strong positive signal for SMEs during economically difficult times.

The SBA contains a lot of improvements for SMEs, from better regulation to special regulations concerning national funding or access to public tenders. “This is a firm base and a first step towards a serious European SME policy”, said President Leitl. “The SBA will contribute to the reduction of European bureaucracy by 25 percent. SMEs have great expectations. A lagging SME policy must not let them down. Now it is up to the Member States not to waste any time in implementing the SBA!” concluded SME UNION President Leitl.

Further information: sme@sme-union.org, www.sme-union.org; Tel: +32/2/233 38 38

SME UNION (Small and Medium Entrepreneurs Union) of the EPP (European People's Party) is the network of pro-business Christian-Democrat, Conservative and Liberal politicians and political organizations. Its main objective is to help in shaping EU policy in a more SME friendly way. www.sme-union.org