



Brussels, 19 March 2009

**SME UNION President Leitl: Europe's heads of states and governments must speak with one strong voice**

“Especially in the forefront of the G-20-Summit in London on 2 April it is of tremendous importance that Europe’s heads of states and governments speak with one strong voice to pronounce a clear statement for an ambitious economic recovery program. The EU has to be a role model”, states SME UNION President Christoph Leitl in the run-up to the EU summit in Brussels on March 19 and 20. “The EU has to work together to overcome the crisis and emerge from it even stronger.”

Leitl supports the demands of German Prime Minister Merkel and French President Sarkozy who appeal with a letter to the EU summit for a common signal against protectionism and excessive debts: “Protectionism is no solution for the EU. We have a common market. Protectionism would only emphasise the crisis and provoke the opposite effects.”

Leitl very much appreciates the initiative of Angel Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy to step up against the pro-cyclical effects of the current Basel II Agreement which would emphasis the crisis: “After the previous proposals on the level of the EU and G-20, which would have eased the effects too late, it is now a strong sign that the importance of the situation is recognized”, says Leitl. The SME UNION President was the first high-ranking business leader who emphasised this topic already in December 2008 in a letter to the EU Commissioners in charge on European level.

Leitl welcomes the idea to extend the EU-balance of payments aids. “This would mean a concrete and vital help for our Eastern European Member States. There has to be an unbureaucratic and quick extension of the credit limit to grant fast help in case of emergency” concluded the SME UNION President.

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**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](http://www.sme-union.org)