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Press-Release

AEB Delegation Meets Top EU Representatives in Brussels

Delegation of the Association of European Businesses presents key issues for European business in Russia to the EU authorities, November 24-26, 2008

On November 24-26, a delegation from the Executive Board of the Association of European Businesses in the Russian Federation headed by Philippe Cohen, the Deputy Chairman of the AEB Executive Board, visited Brussels for a busy schedule of meetings with some of the main actors in the European Commission.

During meetings with Eneko Landaburu, the chief negotiator on the new EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement from EU side, and Lazlo Kovacs, Commissioner for Taxation and Customs, the AEB delegation has emphasized the importance of the continuation of the constructive dialogue between two parties and expressed its commitment to work towards the tighter economic cooperation between European Union and Russia.

Also the AEB took this opportunity to meet with the Head of the Permanent Representation of the Russian Federation towards the EU Vladimir Chizhov, who is the chief negotiator on the new EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement from Russian side, to share the outlook of the AEB on the current economic situation in Russia and highlight the issues of importance for European businesses. The AEB was pleased to hear the commitment of the Russian side to expedite the negotiation process. It was also commonly acknowledged that the Russian WTO accession will be a major step in the negotiations on the framework agreement.

The other issues on the agenda for discussions included taxation and migration issues as well as the proposed measures for the improvement of the overall investment climate for European businesses in Russia. The AEB is pleased to see the deep interest of European Commission in the state of affairs of European businesses working in Russia.

During the mission the AEB Delegation is also holding meetings with Arnaldo Abruzzini, Secretary General of EuroChambers and Philippe de Buck, Secretary General of BusinessEurope, doing presentations of its work and discussing the future cooperation between the parties.

Philippe Cohen, the Deputy Chairman of the AEB Executive Board, commented: *“Association of European Businesses is happy to continue its initiative started last year to visit Brussels on a high-profile mission to the EU. We are highly impressed by the interest of the EU side in the affairs of European businesses operating in Russia and their readiness to make an input towards better conditions for cooperation. We were assured of the EU commitment to a positive and constructive dialogue with Russia and AEB certainly looks forward to play its role in the process”*.

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Note for editors

About the AEB

Founded in 1995, the AEB is an independent non-commercial association with a membership of over 600 companies from across the European Union and Russia. Our members range from large multi-national corporations to SMBs and are united by their commitment to forging stronger economic ties between the EU and Russia, as well as improving the business environment here in Russia.

The AEB conducts lobbying activity through its committees and working groups, which cover a wide spectrum of industries and sectors, including Energy, Customs & Transport, Airlines, Legal, Taxation and Banking – to name but a few. The committees work closely with the Russian authorities, for instance, by holding public and closed meetings with government representatives and submitting comments and amendments to Russian legislation.

With a packed events schedule (conferences, seminars, roundtables and EuroReceptions) the AEB brings together the diplomatic, political and business worlds in Russia. Information on upcoming AEB events can be found on our website at www.aebrus.ru

The AEB also offers informational support to the European business community via its website and publications, press campaigns, surveys and legislative and business alerts. The Association works hard to support its members wherever they are located in Russia by hosting regional presentations, business missions and maintaining regional representations, such as the Krasnodar Steering Committee and a local presence in Ekaterinburg.

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