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Press-Release

**Association of European Businesses (AEB) meets
with EU Commission President, Jose Manuel Barroso**

On March 21, 2013, the Board of the Association of European Businesses met with European Union Commission President, Jose Manuel Barroso at Baltshug Hotel, Moscow. This meeting is part of Mr. Barroso's programme during the largest-ever EU-Commission visit to Russia with a 16-Commissioner strong delegation headed by Mr. Barroso. The AEB was represented by Mr. Reiner Hartmann (Chairman of the AEB Executive Board), Dr. Frank Schauff (AEB CEO) and other AEB Board Members.

The AEB took this opportunity to voice its concerns regarding issues of importance for the European businesses working in Russia. The discussion focused on the European Commission's vision on the further development of EU-Russia relations. The discussion also touched upon EU's long term aspiration with Russia, the role of the business community in this relationship and the investment climate in Russia.

Some of the issues discussed at the meeting also included implementation of Russia's WTO accession protocol, the Eurasian integration process, visa facilitation and visa liberalisation processes, promotion of European investments into the Russian economy in times of crisis.

Mr. Barroso promised to take up the position of European businesses during his meeting with President Putin and other representatives.

The EU Commission President has emphasised the EU commitment to enhance the dialogue and to promote new ties of partnership between Russia and the EU.

Reiner Hartmann, Chairman of the AEB Board, commented: "The Association of European Businesses has been highly impressed by the constructive spirit accompanying the EU-Commission President's visit to Russia. We are sure that existing issues between the EU and Russia will be overcome, if both sides are putting into practice this constructive approach. This certainly will enhance the further strengthening of the already strong economic ties between both partners."

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