

Brussels, 22 September 2016

**Subject: Competitiveness Council / Unified Patent Court Agreement**

As representatives of Europe's SME community, we urge all countries involved to do everything possible to enable the swift ratification of the Unified Patent Court Agreement, which is on the agenda of the Competitiveness Council on 29 September.

We will not provide a detailed explanation of the merits of effective unitary patent protection, with which you are of course by now familiar. It is, however, worth underlining the exponential advantages to SMEs in terms of legal certainty, administrative simplification, reduced costs for the protection of innovations and economies of scale in general.

There are many ways in which the single market remains incomplete to SMEs, but the ratification and entry into force of the UPCA - a key factor in the delivery of a reformed and more efficient European patent system - is tantalisingly within reach.

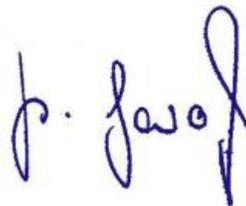
On behalf of Europe's innovative SMEs, we call on ministers and officials to do everything possible on 29 September to ensure that this process crosses the finishing line in the immediate future and does not, after all these years of discussion, again become engulfed in broader discussions.

An efficient, affordable patent regime is a key factor in Europe's capacity to compete and innovate, so please ensure that the UPCA is ratified without delay.

Yours sincerely,



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Peter Faross  
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*Should you or your team require any clarification or wish to discuss the matter further, please contact Ben Butters at EUROCHAMBRES ([butters@eurochambres.eu](mailto:butters@eurochambres.eu) / +32 2282 0871), or Luc Hendrickx at UEAPME ([l.hendrickx@ueapme.com](mailto:l.hendrickx@ueapme.com) +32 2230 7599).*

UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 65 member organisations, which represent crafts and SMEs across Europe, covering over 12 million enterprises with 55 million employees.

EUROCHAMBRES, the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry, represents over 20 million enterprises in Europe – 98% of which are SMEs – through members in 43 countries and a European network of 1700 regional and local Chambers.