Brussels, 22 November 2004
PRE 67/04 (Presse)

The 2624th session of the Council of the European Union (COMPETITIVENESS - Internal Market, Industry and Research) will take place on 25 and 26 November 2004, in the Justus Lipsius Building, Brussels, under the Presidency of Mr. Laurens BRINKHORST, Minister for Economic Affairs and Ms Maria VAN DER HOEVEN, Minister for Education, Culture and Science, of Netherlands.

The Council will start at 9.30 on Thursday 25 November and at 10.00 on Friday 26 November.

The following points will be discussed at this session:

HORIZONTAL QUESTIONS

- Economic and competitiveness situation
  = Information from the Presidency

- Mid-term review of the Lisbon strategy – Kok Report
  = Policy debate

- Better Regulation - Simplification of legislation
  = Council conclusions

INDIVIDUAL POLICY FILES

REACH
- Regulation concerning the registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals (REACH), establishing a European Chemicals Agency, and

  = Policy debate

- Directive on Services in the Internal Market
  = Policy debate
– Directive on cross-border mergers of companies with share capital
  – General approach

– Council Regulation laying down rules for the monitoring of trade between the Community and third countries in drug precursors
  = Political agreement
  (Public deliberation)

– Commission Communication on Textiles and clothing after 2005 – Recommendations of the High Level Group
  = Council conclusions

– Space policy
  = Preparation of the first "Space Council" (before the opening of the "Space Council")
  = Approval of the guidelines on the progressive development of the European Space Programme (after the conclusion of the "Space Council")

– ITER: Amendment of negotiating directives on international negotiations for the future establishment of an ITER legal entity for ITER construction and operation
  = Council Decision

– Commission Communication on Science and technology, the key to Europe's future: Guidelines for future European Union policy to support research
  – Policy debate
  – Council conclusions

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A press conference will be held by the President of the Council at the end of each session.