

Making Europe  
More Attractive

**LA BAULE**  
JUNE 4, 5 & 6  
**2008**

# PRESS RELEASE

Paris, June 27, 2008

## 6<sup>th</sup> WORLD INVESTMENT CONFERENCE (WIC) SUMMING UP

### I- KEYFIGURES

#### 25% RISE IN THE NUMBER OF HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPANTS

The sixth La Baule World Investment Conference brought together over 1,000 high-level participants from all parts of the world, including entrepreneurs, investors, academics, researchers and political leaders from 44 countries. "We certainly achieved our quantitative goal for participation, which reached the limit we had set with a view to preserving the informal character of this annual event for decisions-makers concerned with the issues of European attractiveness and competitiveness," notes Patrice Lefeu, *CEO of the Europe+ Foundation and Executive Director of the La Baule World Investment Conference*.

Organizers observed a steep rise in the representation of international business, in particular in new technology and environment-related sectors. Nearly 70% of participants were business people, and for the first time they included representatives of investment and venture-capital funds. "The growing presence of business people is a very positive development," comments Patrice Lefeu. "The La Baule World Investment Conference has become a focal point for meetings between prime movers shaping the present and future of the world economy. Their attendance is a sign of their interest in Europe as a marketplace for innovation, and recognition of its appeal for investors, technology and talent."

**OVER 200 SPEAKERS CONTRIBUTED**, among them Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, Danuta Hübner, *EU Commissioner for Regional Policy*, Naguib Sawiris, *founder of Orascom Telecom*, Ursula Burns, *President of Xerox Corporation*, and Laurence Parisot, *President of the French business confederation Medef*, as well as the architect David Fisher and the designer Philippe Starck. They shared their views and ideas with an attentive audience in a full program of plenary sessions, workshops, roundtables and breakfast debates.

**OVER 50 HIGH-TECH**, businesses from Silicon Valley and over 30 startups in environmental technologies were on hand to meet businesses using their technologies and innovative European entrepreneurs as part of their moves to build their presence in Europe.

### II- FOUR THEME-BASED CONFERENCES WITH THE SHARED GOAL OF PROMOTING AND REINFORCING EUROPE

Organizing four parallel conferences was naturally a challenge, but was justified by the common goal of developing concrete recommendations for the upcoming French Presidency and, more broadly, for the next European Commission.

#### FORCEFUL RECOMMENDATIONS:

The work of the sixth World Investment Conference, which was dedicated to the theme "Brainpower in Europe — the driver for growth", led to the formulation of some one hundred recommendations, to be presented in a report this September. The main proposal is to shape the agenda of the next European Commission around a strategy based on human capital for value creation, replacing the notion of people at the center of an innovation-driven society that inspired the Lisbon agenda in 2000.

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• **THE 3<sup>rd</sup> EUROMED INVESTMENT CONFERENCE (EIC)**, held in a context marked by President Sarkozy's proposals for a Union for the Mediterranean, benefited from the mobilization of business and economic circles on both sides of the Mediterranean, with participants including trade ministers from North Africa and representatives of employer federations, among them Laurence Parisot, *President of France's Medef*. They share the belief that businesses based in Europe and around the Mediterranean should play the central role in projects for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation and economic development. A key recommendation was that small and medium-size businesses should be actively involved in major projects structuring the Union for the Mediterranean.

• **THE 2<sup>nd</sup> CALIFORNIA TECHNOLOGY SHOWCASE (CTS)** confirmed the success of the first event in the previous year.

A select group of 50 startups, chosen from a field of over 800 high-tech businesses based in California, were on hand to take part in 300 one-on-one meetings with European entrepreneurs, investors, and political representatives. Visiting the Showcase's exhibition area, Governor Perry said "Next year, I want to see innovative Texas businesses here in La Baule winning their places in Europe." Reflecting this success, next year's event will be remodeled as the Global Technology Showcase, bringing together high-tech businesses from Asia as well as Europe and the US.

• **THE 1<sup>st</sup> TRANSATLANTIC GREEN PLATFORM (TGP)** conference beat its initial targets for the level and quality of participation. Investment funds specializing in environmental technologies and renewable energy, among them ALOE, accepted invitations, as did a number of British and Scandinavian investors. The event aims to promote and reinforce transatlantic dialogue between businesses, universities, research centers, investors and political leaders.

A highlight was the presentation of awards to the two most promising green-tech firms selected by an international 10-member jury. *Commissioner Danuta Hübner, Governor Rick Perry and William Becker, an academic and Executive Director of the Presidential Climate Action Project presented the awards.*

The winners were **Perpetuum**, a UK firm specialized in the conversion of unused mechanical vibrations into electrical energy powering industrial wireless sensors, and **Solazyme**, a US firm specialized the use of marine microbes to create clean solutions for the renewable energy, industrial chemical and specialty ingredient markets.

For Patrice Lefeu, the conference marked the success of a bold venture. *"The Transatlantic Green Platform holds great promise for the future," he comments, "judging by the enthusiasm of the participants from both Europe and the US. They found it a useful tool to favor the emergence of innovation and new industrial applications in the fields of environmental technology and renewable energy."*

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The Europe+ Foundation is an independent platform that supplies analytical tools and governance guidance to promote the attractiveness and competitiveness of the European Union, its Member States and regions. The Foundation's aim is to take the conclusions of WIC working groups further and ensure follow-up of recommendations addressed to the European Commission and the European Parliament, as well as to governments and Member States. "Europe+ is a dynamic platform founded on the exchange of best practices, the diversity of its members, the multiplicity of its experiences and public-private partnership. We are neither a lobby associated with particular interest groups, nor a traditional think tank working on general or purely theoretical positions," remind the two Co-Chairmen of the Foundation. The high-level think tank of Europe+ gathers more than a hundred international personalities drawn from the world of business, government and academia.