



Press Statement by Leif Johansson

As Chairman of the European Round Table of Industrialists, I would like to thank President Hollande for inviting a delegation from the ERT. We are here tonight to discuss how energy and industrial policies can help to restore Europe's competitiveness, growth and employment.

While EU forecasts for 2014 predict economic recovery, we still have work to do as many industrial sectors do not yet see significant improvement. The share of industry to EU GDP continues to decline, as the EU needs to address the fundamental economic, regulatory and social challenges, which threaten its long-term competitiveness.

Europe's industrial renaissance must remain the priority. There will be no European sustainable prosperity possible without industrial competitiveness. European industry significantly contributes to employment, innovation, and trade. Its global competitiveness matters for the whole of the EU economy, as for every single new industrial job, two new jobs are created in other sectors.

ERT supports the goal of increasing EU industry's share of GDP to at least 20% by 2020. This can best be achieved if the EU renews its political determination to complete the Single Market.

European companies need the size and structure of the Single Market to be competitive globally. A particular focus should be given to establishing a genuine Single Market in the energy and ICT sectors. They are decisive enablers for cross-sectoral competitiveness and growth, for both large and small companies, and therefore key to Europe's attractiveness as an investment location.

To strengthen Europe's industrial base, EU leaders need to ensure effective coordination and alignment of EU and national policies. This is particularly relevant to energy, climate and state aid policies to address Europe's high energy costs which put increasing competitive pressure on the region. Any climate or energy policy must be adapted to ensure that the goal to increase industry's share of EU GDP to 20% by 2020 is respected.

At the same time, the EU needs to take decisive actions to address the growing skills gap through the development of more responsive education systems. The EU also needs to seize the opportunity of concluding an ambitious and comprehensive Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (T-TIP). This will not only boost the creation of jobs and growth in the EU, but also offers a strategic opportunity to help shape the framework for future global trade.

19 February 2014