



PRESS RELEASE

ERT delegation meets President Macron, Chancellor Scholz, President von der Leyen and President Michel in Paris

PARIS, 1 March 2022: President Macron, Chancellor Scholz, European Commission President von der Leyen, European Council President Michel and a delegation of Members of the European Round Table for Industry (ERT) met in Paris yesterday evening.

ERT Members, all CEOs and Chairs of some of Europe's most significant industrial companies, underline their support for the EU and the peace and prosperity that unity has brought over the past decades. The meeting is part of a tradition of dialogue between the leaders and the Members of ERT°. At this time of alarming geopolitical agitation and economic pressure, they discussed the most pressing issues for the immediate and long term.

RUSSIA-UKRAINE

With the unprovoked, unfolding invasion of Ukraine, ERT gives their full support for the EU's economic and financial sanctions towards Russia.

Carl-Henric Svanberg, ERT Chair and Chair of Volvo Group said *“The European business community is appalled by the unlawful invasion of Ukraine and our hearts go out to the people of Ukraine – the ones who have stayed courageously and the women & children seeking refuge in other countries. This is one of the most significant moments in contemporary European history. But for all the challenges of securing alignment between 27 countries, the EU has a track record of emerging from crises stronger – and at this time it is reassuring to see the power of unity shining through. President Macron, Chancellor Scholz, other heads of government and President von der Leyen made every effort to resolve the threat in the preceding weeks and have acted decisively. We at ERT fully support the EU's actions.”*

He added *“The war in Ukraine is only days old, but its continuing escalation is a test to our European values and interests. The implications on security, energy supply, trade relations and geopolitics will continue to play out for a long time. The urgent and intertwined nature of all of these issues demands deep strategic thought by the leaders of all EU member states – as well as rapid, united action.”*

LONG TERM COMPETITIVENESS

As significant employers, innovators and investors in European regions, the ERT delegation also exchanged with the leaders on the implications of the current situation on the long-term industrial outlook for Europe on the following priority areas:

1. **Strengthening Europe – Competitiveness & the Single Market***: This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Maastricht Treaty, the dawn of the Single Market. As a foundation of EU unity and prosperity, it needs renewed political attention to ensure

that new technologies can be scaled rapidly across Member States, without being compromised by national barriers.

2. **The urgent need to accelerate Green transition:** Steering the energy transition through the current wave of inflation and geopolitical disruption to supply, every effort must be made to ensure that the Green Deal and EU industrial policy remain compatible and capable of reaching the all-important targets of the Paris Climate Agreement**, enhanced by EU competitiveness. A real Energy Union is the key to reaching our decarbonisation goals, achieving energy self-sufficiency and consolidating the leadership of European industry in the global green economy.
3. **Digital transition as a key pillar of Europe's future:** Alongside established challenges such as slow, fragmented 5G rollout, the pressing issue of cybersecurity and data-sharing need further attention if Europe is to be cyber-resilient and gain a place at the global forefront of digital developments.
4. **International trade:** The current crisis illustrates once more that Europe must lead as a defender of the multilateral rules-based system, by maintaining open trade in an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment. This means continuing to invest in constructive relations with other trading blocs while maintaining a realistic view of the diplomatic depth of those relationships and taking a strong position in the face of unfair behaviour.
5. **Addressing the Skills gap:** The pandemic has accelerated the step-change of the green and digital transitions underway. More investment is needed in education, training and reskilling*** along with better co-operation between the public and private sectors.

Note to Editors:

The names of the CEOs & Chairs in the ERT delegation are listed on the next page. A full list of the membership of ERT is accessible [here](#).

° A press release from the last such meeting, in October 2019 is available [here](#).

* More information on ERT's recently released publication *Renewing the dynamic of European integration: Single Market Stories by Business Leaders* is available here: <https://ert.eu/single-market>

** To find out about the climate targets & projects underway at companies led by Members of ERT, visit <https://industry4climate.eu>

*** ERT has just launched the websites for its Reskilling initiative, R4E. The programme is already being championed by 7 companies led by Members of ERT and is active in 3 EU countries, with more expected soon. For more information, visit <https://r4e.eu>

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About the European Round Table for Industry (ERT)

The European Round Table for Industry (ERT) is a forum that brings together around 60 Chief Executives and Chairs of leading multinational companies of European parentage, covering a wide range of industrial and technological sectors. ERT strives for a strong, open and competitive Europe, with the EU and its Single Market as a driver for inclusive growth and sustainable prosperity. Companies of ERT Members have combined revenues exceeding €2 trillion, providing direct jobs to

around 5 million people worldwide – of which half are in Europe – and sustaining millions of indirect jobs. They invest more than €60 billion annually in R&D, largely in Europe. www.ert.eu

ERT Delegation, PARIS, 28 February 2022

1. **Carl-Henric Svanberg** Chair, ERT
Chairman, AB Volvo
2. **Martin Bruder Müller** Chair, ERT Committee on Competitiveness & Innovation
Chairman of the Board of Executive Directors, BASF
3. **Dimitri Papalexopoulos** Chair, ERT Committee on Energy Transition & Climate Change
Chairman of the Executive Committee, TITAN Cement
4. **Christian Klein** Chair, ERT Committee on Digital Transformation
Chief Executive Officer, SAP
5. **Peter Wennink** President & CEO, ASML
6. **Jacob Wallenberg** Chair, ERT Committee on Trade & Market Access
Chair, Investor AB
7. **José María Álvarez-Pallete** Chairman and CEO, Telefónica
8. **Jean-François van Boxmeer** Chairman, Vodafone Group
9. **Guillaume Faury** Chief Executive Officer, Airbus
10. **Ignacio S. Galán** Chairman and CEO, Iberdrola
11. **Ilham Kadri** CEO & President of the Executive Committee, Solvay
12. **Martina Merz** Chief Executive Officer, thyssenkrupp
13. **Benoît Potier** Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Air Liquide
14. **Alessandro Profumo** Chief Executive Officer, Leonardo
15. **Frank Heemskerk** Secretary General, ERT