



STATEMENT

ERT gathers in Zurich, meets Enrico Letta and Guy Parmelin

Zurich, 27 May 2024: The European Round Table for Industry (ERT) met in Zurich yesterday and today for its annual spring plenary. The meeting, hosted by **Jan Jenisch**, Chairman of Holcim, brought together leaders from around 50 of Europe's most significant industrial and technology companies with operations worldwide.

As significant employers, innovators and investors in European regions, these semi-annual meetings are the opportunity for ERT Members* to discuss some of the key themes of the moment. This meeting was honoured with an intervention by **Enrico Letta**, President of the Jacques Delors Institute on his recent report on the EU Single Market and by Federal Councillor **Guy Parmelin**, Head of the Swiss Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research.

As a cross-sectoral high-level forum, ERT's focus is on the long-term industrial outlook for Europe, most pertinently the EU's declining competitiveness against the backdrop of a shifting geopolitical landscape. Discussions at the meeting were focused on the following:

1. **EU Single Market:** As the 30th anniversary of the dawn of the Single Market comes to a close, ERT wants to see renewed political investment in its improvement. As a foundation of EU unity and prosperity, ERT fully supports Mr Letta's call for the deepening of the Single Market. At the moment, a true European Energy Union looks increasingly urgent and key to achieving EU decarbonisation targets. Furthermore, the European Capital Markets Union would deliver much-needed new avenues of funding for European innovation, in particular for tech start-ups & scale-ups.
2. **Pursuing turnaround in Europe's competitiveness:** As the digital and green transitions advance, ERT is keen to see how Mario Draghi's forthcoming programme on EU competitiveness will address the bloc's contradictions. ERT has called for a much more holistic approach to its competitiveness – by bolstering investment in infrastructure and fostering pro-business regulation to enhance Europe's appeal to investors.
3. **Innovation:** With innovation now a key determinant of competitiveness, a rethink of the regulation and funding of this sector is needed – refocusing on robust IP rights and standardisation and realising the scale-up of investment-intensive innovation.
4. **Addressing the Skills gap:** ERT is a vocal supporter of the effort to build a culture of lifelong learning and reskilling in Europe – as evidenced by its reskilling programme, R4E°. With the twin transitions driving an urgent need for new skillsets, EU support for reskilling needs more volume and more resources. More investment

is urgently needed in education, training and reskilling along with better co-operation between the public and private sector.

5. **Trade:** Unpredictable geopolitics and the multi-faceted implications of the wars between Russia & Ukraine and Hamas & Israel continue to deepen the complexity of international cooperation and in the dynamics between the US, China and Europe. Nevertheless, Europe must remain a longstanding defender of the multilateral rules-based system and open trade.

Competitiveness & Economic Confidence

Among the internal working groups within ERT, **Dr Ilham Kadri** (CEO of Syensqo and Member of ERT since 2019) will now take on the role of Chair of ERT's Committee on Competitiveness & Innovation, following four years of excellent leadership by **Dr Martin Brudermüller**, outgoing CEO of BASF SE. Dr Kadri will also assume the role of **Vice-Chair of ERT**.

In addition, **the results of The Conference Board's latest independent semi-annual economic confidence survey** of the CEOs & Chairs in ERT were circulated. The survey results include strong signals on the burden of regulation in Europe, as well as sentiment on economic confidence, investment, competitiveness and the EU-China relationship. It will be released on Wednesday this week.

Note to Editors:

* The names of the ERT Members in attendance at the meeting in Zurich are on **the pages that follow**. A full list of the membership of ERT is accessible <https://ert.eu/members/>

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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 Plenary attendees, Zurich, 27 May 2024

Jean-François van Boxmeer	Chair, ERT Chairman, Vodafone Group	
Dimitri Papalexopoulos	Vice-Chair, ERT Chairman of the Executive Committee, TITAN Cement	
José María Álvarez-Pallete	Chair, ERT Committee on Jobs, Skills & Impact Chairman and CEO, Telefónica	
Nils Andersen	Chair, ERT Committee on Competition Policy Chairman, Unilever	
Aiman Ezzat	Chair, ERT Committee on Digital Transformation CEO, Capgemini Group	
Jacob Wallenberg	Chair, ERT Committee on Trade & Market Access Chair, Investor AB	
Oliver Zipse	Chair, ERT CFO Platform Chairman of the Board of Management, BMW Group	
Jean-Paul Agon	Chairman	L'Oréal
Zoltán Áldott	Chairman of the Supervisory Board	MOL
José María Álvarez-Pallete	Chairman and CEO	Telefónica
Cláudia Azevedo	Chief Executive Officer	Sonae
Leonhard Birnbaum	CEO	E.ON
Dolf van den Brink	Chairman of the Executive Board and CEO	HEINEKEN
Pierre-André de Chalendar	Chairman of the Board	Saint-Gobain
Jean-Pierre Clamadiou	Chairman of the Board	ENGIE SA
Vincent Clerc	Chief Executive Officer	A.P. Møller- Mærsk
Rodolfo De Benedetti	Chairman	CIR
Michel Demaré	Chairman	AstraZeneca
Claudio Descalzi	CEO	Eni
Henrik Ehrnrooth	President and CEO	KONE
Börje Ekholm	President and CEO	Ericsson
Guillaume Faury	Chief Executive Officer	Airbus
Ignacio Galán	Executive Chairman	Iberdrola
Óscar García Maceiras	Chief Executive Officer	Inditex
Peter Herweck	Chief Executive Officer	Schneider Electric
Christel Heydemann	Chief Executive Officer	Orange
Roy Jakobs	Chief Executive Officer	Royal Philips
Jan Jenisch	Chief Executive Officer	Holcim
Ilham Kadri	Chief Executive Officer	Syensqo
Ola Källenius	Chairman of the Board of Management	Mercedes-Benz Group AG
Thomas Leysen	Chairman of the Board	dsm-firmenich
Helge Lund	Chairman	bp
Pekka Lundmark	President & CEO	Nokia
Martin Lundstedt	President and CEO	AB Volvo
Florent Menegaux	Chief Executive Officer	Michelin
Mathias Miedreich	Chief Executive Officer	Umicore
Rafael del Pino	Chairman	Ferrovial
Benoît Potier	Chairman	Air Liquide
Patrick Pouyanné	Chairman of the Board and CEO	TotalEnergies

Gianfelice Rocca

Chairman

Techint Group of
Companies

Güler Sabanci

Chair

Sabanci Holding

Wael Sawan

Chief Executive Officer

Shell

Mark Schneider

Chief Executive Officer

Nestlé

Severin Schwan

Chairman of the Board

Roche

Kurt Sievers

President & CEO

NXP Semiconductors N.V.

Tony Smurfit

Group Chief Executive Officer

Smurfit Kappa Group

Jim Hagemann Snabe

Chairman

Siemens

Jakob Stausholm

Chief Executive Officer

Rio Tinto

Carl-Henric Svanberg

Chairman

AB Volvo

Jonathan Symonds

Chair

GSK

Jan-Eric Sundgren

Acting Secretary General, ERT

Frank Heemskerck

former Secretary General, ERT