

COVID-19 CRISIS: WE NEED A STRONG EUROPE

Statement ahead of the EU heads of state and government video call

22 April 2020

Dear EU leaders,

In order to overcome the extraordinary challenges the COVID-19 pandemic brings, the European Union must show that it is more than the sum of its members. Pushed by the urgency at hand, Member States have rightfully taken the lead in recent weeks, but this unfortunately leads us to a scattered landscape of measures. Recovering from the crisis, only European solutions can work, putting the Single Market as the central instrument. More than ever we need a strong Europe, where its governments, businesses and citizens show their solidarity.

Examples of solidarity can be seen everywhere across our continent: from volunteers who sew masks at home for the bakery staff around the corner, to companies donating disinfectants and governments that organise joint procurement of medical devices. But the temptation to look inwards is strong. Here, European governments must be at the forefront, showing solidarity among each other, ensuring all Member States have market access to funds needed for their recovery, and also making sure their citizens understand the added value that our common European project brings in these unprecedented and difficult times.

In our daily business operations, we see that the response to the current crisis is not less Europe, but more Europe, and it starts with our common European market. It is vital to ensure transportation of essential goods and flow of services across our borders, such as medical, pharmaceutical, food and energy. The European Commission's initiatives on 'Green Lanes' and on the free movement of workers are highly welcomed to support the functioning of the Single Market. We urge you to do your utmost to ensure that it delivers on the ground without delay.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all those who work relentlessly to reduce the spread of the virus, increasing our ability to cope with its impacts, and in particular to those showing exceptional courage both in treating the sick and in maintaining the vital goods and services upon which we all depend to be able to succeed.

Yours sincerely,

Claude Alber, Vice President Europe, Collins Aerospace

Guillaume Alvarez, Senior Vice-President, Europe, Middle-East & Africa, Steelcase

Maurici Lucena Betriu, CEO AENA Spanish Airports

Markus Borchert, CEO of Nokia Shanghai and President of Nokia Greater China / President DIGITALEUROPE

Emilio Braghi, Senior Vice President and President, Novelis Europe / Chairman European Aluminium

Martin Brudermüller, CEO BASF

Armando Brunini, CEO SEA Milan Airports

Neil Carr, President Dow Europe, Middle East, Africa and India

Régis Degelcke, Former Chairman Auchan Retail / President EuroCommerce

Chris Delaney, President Goodyear Europe, Middle East and Africa

Daniele Ferrari, CEO Versalis (Eni) / President Cefic

Pierre Gattaz, Chairman of Executive Board Radiall / President BusinessEurope

Mark Green, President, AES Eurasia

Lars Hanseid, President EMEA, 3M

Ilham Kadri, CEO Solvay

Jost Lammers, CEO Munich Airport / President ACI EUROPE

Michael Manley, CEO Fiat Chrysler Automobiles / President ACEA

Silviu Popovici, President Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa PepsiCo

Niels Pörksen, CEO Südzucker AG

Ignasi Ricou, CEO GBFoods

Lou Riviaccio, President, UPS Europe

Malcolm Sheil, President and CEO Europe Kerry Group

Jean-Christophe Tellier, CEO UCB / President EFPIA