

Mr. Heinz Zourek
Director General
DG Enterprise and Industry
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
Bruxelles 1049

25th April 2006

THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Dear Director General Zourek,

On the 9th of February 1999 UNICE had cause to write to the then Commissioner with responsibility for industrial matters, Dr. Bangemann, with reference to a Council Directive relating to units of measurement (1999/103/EC).

In that letter we expressed strong support for the Commission proposal which aims at ensuring standardization on SI units but which also "*postponed by an additional 10 years the end of the transition period provided for in Article 3 of Directive 89/617/EEC allowing supplementary indications of units of measurement (in both metric and imperial)*".

UNICE continues to support the intention of the European Commission to ensure standardization on SI units. We believe it is the right course of action because worldwide use of one system for units can provide considerable benefits both to industry and to the consumer. However in striving for this goal mainly through legislative means we also believe that it should not give rise to situation which can be damaging to market actors.

In this context UNICE has noted that ORGALIME has recently produced a position paper on this subject (entitled *ORGALIME position on Council Directive 1999/103/EC of 24 January 2000 relating to units of measurement*). UNICE is supportive of ORGALIME's position on this issue. We agree with the general thrust of the paper when it suggests that even though the introduction of standardization for SI units is desirable, the Commission should allow the use of supplementary indications (dual labeling) on products indefinitely so as to avoid imposing unnecessary burdens and cost on European companies. In the spirit of better regulation it should be left up to each market segment to judge the speed at which it adopts the SI units system, if it has not already done so.

UNICE would also like to support references to the importance of communicating the benefits of the SI system worldwide. This can be done by encouraging others to consider the use of the SI system and by driving an educational process wherever relevant. We believe as well that the Commission should regularly review the situation and report on progress in order to judge whether further measures to encourage the use of SI might be required.

While we are aware that your services have not as yet started work on this issue, we believe, given the fact that the provisions governing dual labeling run out in 2009, that it is prudent to address you on this issue at this early stage and make you aware of our views. We remain of course at your disposal if you or your representatives wish to discuss this issue in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

best regards,



Philippe de Buck
