



For immediate release:

COMPETITION EXPERTS MAKE THE CASE FOR CONVERGENCE

Brussels, 30 November, 2001 – Competition experts from around the world gathered here yesterday to make the case for convergence of international competition regimes, and to urge regulators in Canada and the European Union to take a leadership role in harmonising competition regulations.

Meeting under the auspices of the Canada Europe Round Table for Business (CERT) symposium, *International Competition Law: The Business Case for Convergence*, panellists and guests discussed the many different challenges faced by business in dealing with inconsistent competition rules in different jurisdictions. Speakers included leaders from the business and legal communities, as well as academia, consumer representatives and regulators.

“The problem is one of cost,” said J. William Rowley, Q.C., Chairman of the Global Competition Forum of the International Bar Association. “It is a human cost, a business cost, and an out-of-pocket cost to hire the many lawyers and consultants needed to advise on these issues.”

The symposium follows the CERT CEO Round Table held on 28 November, where CERT’s Interest Group on Competition Policy presented 15 key recommendations for an international competition regime, and urged the European Union and the Government of Canada to show leadership in the convergence debate. The report and recommendations will be formally submitted to government representatives at the Canada-EU Summit on 18 December in Ottawa, Canada.

Rufus Ogilvie-Smals, Chairman of the Competition Panel for the Confederation of British Industry, applauded CERT’s initiative. “The voice of business in this debate is long overdue,” he said. “CERT is the first organisation to hold an event of this nature, and I congratulate them for providing us with this opportunity.”

Editors Note:

The Canada Europe Round Table for Business is a permanent forum for dialogue on major trade and investment matters among senior business leaders, Canadian and European, and between business leaders and governments. Initiated in 1999 by a number of European and Canadian companies, CERT operates on the belief that enhanced economic relations can offer the most substantial and tangible route to greater transatlantic co-operation in all aspects of the Canada-EU relationship. Founding members include Alcan, Interbrew, Tractebel and EADS.

CERT's mission is to promote and strengthen trade and investment dialogue between the EU and Canada in the bilateral and global economic interests of both industry and government. To achieve this, CERT members work with the Canadian and EU administrations to help shape the economic policy issues that are of key importance to this trans-Atlantic business community.

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