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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

SMEs sign up to the Commission's Joint Initiative on Standardisation *Better SME representation, internationalisation, prioritisation*

Brussels, 14th June 2016 – Yesterday, Small Business Standards (SBS) endorsed the Joint Initiative on Standardisation⁽¹⁾ in the presence of Commissioner Elżbieta Bieńkowska. This initiative focuses on 15 concrete actions aimed at modernising, prioritising and streamlining the delivery of standards by the end of 2019, some of which are specifically designed for smaller companies. Standards are crucial for SMEs, therefore these actions are a further step towards better representation of SMEs in the standardisation world.

Standards are becoming increasingly important when placing products on the open market, accessing new products and offering services and are, therefore, highly relevant for SMEs. SBS therefore welcomes the Joint Initiative launched by the European Commission between the public and private partners in the European Standardisation System. This Initiative sets out 15 concrete actions, some of which are specifically designed for smaller companies, such as ensuring their better representation in ISO (International Organization for Standardisation) and other international standardisation bodies, as well as streamlining the standardisation process for construction products.

SBS President Gunilla Almgren commented: "This Joint Initiative does not only set out a long-term vision. It focuses on some of the immediate challenges such as those relating to the standardisation process for construction products. This issue is very close to my heart as over 99% of companies in the construction sector are SMEs, many of which are micro-enterprises."

Moreover, it looks into another important issue for SMEs, namely the development of standards at international level. "Strengthening the representation of the interests of SMEs in the international standardisation processes is essential to ensure that standards developed are SME-friendly", concluded President Almgren.

(1)http://sbs-sme.eu/sites/default/files/extranet/u7304/Signed%20Joint%20Initiative%20on%20Standardisation_3.pdf

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EDITORS' NOTES: Small Business Standards (SBS) is the association representing European SMEs in the standardisation process at European and International levels. Members are national and European sectorial and interprofessional associations representing SMEs all over Europe working in and out of the EU.

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