



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

**Brussels, 11 July 2012**

**12488/12**

**PE 342  
MI 487**

**NOTE**

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from: General Secretariat of the Council  
to: Delegations

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Subject: Partial Summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament's Committee on the Internal Market and consumer protection, Brussels, 10 July 2012  
**Presentation of the Council Presidency's programme by Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism - Competitiveness, Mr. Neoklis SYLIKIOTIS**

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The Chair, Mr. HARBOUR (ECR), made a short presentation on the competences of his Committee and regretted the fact that only a few Members were present at the meeting.

In his intervention, Minister SYLIKIOTIS emphasised the priorities of the Cyprus Presidency which would concentrate on two major axes:

- making as much progress as possible on the promotion and completion of the single market which would strengthen social cohesion and create employment and
- develop new actions that would be proposed by the Commission in September with the aim of agreeing on Council conclusions in December.

A special Conference would be organised in Nicosia on 20 October to debate the achievements and future challenges to create the internal market of the future.

The Minister entered subsequently into the detail of several actions which included:

- the creation of a simplified, flexible and effective framework for public procurement to support sustainable development and more efficient use of public funds,
- reinforcement of mutual trust and cooperation between Member States and citizens as regards professional qualifications,
- the reduction of regulatory and administrative burdens through the simplification of accounting rules and financial disclosure requirements, particularly for small businesses,
- an increase in the protection of citizens by ensuring a high level of protection, facilitating the access

to out-of-court consumer dispute resolution and the protection of health and safety by means of nine legislative measures for which the Minister said he hoped for a first reading agreement.

Reacting to comments and questions from Members on public procurement Minister SYLIKOTIS confirmed that all aspects would be considered, including the facilitation of access by SME's to public bids, environmental and societal effects, innovation and transparency. He said that public procurement could play an important role in tackling the recession and create jobs. Substantial progress could be made rapidly without however overlooking the essential issues or affecting legal certainty. The Minister recognised the specificity of services concessions and the need for a clear, simplified and balanced approach of this sector.

As regards professional qualifications, he stressed the need for more mobility but differences in education and training made harmonisation difficult. The Cyprus Presidency would attempt to serve as a reliable mediator in this complex dossier.

Minister SYLIKOTIS confirmed that the Competitiveness Council had discussed a range of possible policies orientations in order to offer greater stimulation for growth and entrepreneurship. An informal meeting next week would address the real economy in discussions on industrial policy.

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