

Brussels, 1st July 2011

PRESS RELEASE

THE « COMITE EUROPEEN DES ENTREPRISES VINS » (CEEV) WELCOMES THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE EU/SOUTH KOREA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT.

This particularly ambitious agreement is a major step forward for the wine sector and will allow an increase of European exports to Korea.

Brussels, 1st July 2011 – The « Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins » (CEEV) welcomes the entry into force on Friday 1st July of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the European Union and the Republic of South Korea.

The wine sector benefits from important progresses in this agreement, which will allow to improve the market position of EU wines in Korea.

The total and immediate abolition of the customs duties will open new perspectives for the increase of market shares and allow to save about 10 M€ among the 70M€ that represent the European exports of wine to Korea. This tariff elimination restores a level playing field with our Chilean competitors who currently benefit from such conditions, which had led to an important increase of their exports to Korea.

Another major achievement for the wine sector is a true and efficient protection of the most notable geographical indications (GIs). The European Union, through a pragmatic approach aimed at protecting in particular geographical indications with substantial notability and export capacity, was able to obtain recognition of the exclusive protection of European GIs and a level of protection equivalent to the European one. Time has come to ensure an effective, rapid and efficient implementation of this new system.

"European wines are now leaders on the Korean market. Thanks to this free trade agreement, they will be able to consolidate their position and expand market shares in an emerging country with high growth potential", said Nicolas Ozanam, Chairman of the CEEV "International Trade" Commission. "And this in a regulatory environment that allows the most notable geographical indications to benefit from a true and efficient protection, and open the door to expanding on the number of GIs in the future. We call on the European authorities to very closely monitor the effective implementation by the Korean of the measures foreseen. "

"We congratulate in particular the European Commission, the Member States and the European Parliament on this major achievement", said José Ramón Fernández, Secretary General of CEEV. "We renew our commitment to keep on working in close collaboration with the EU institutions to constantly improve the access to international markets for EU wines, which have been one of the main contributors to the net increase of agri-food exports and to the Union's trade balance in 2010".

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Note to editors

The **Comité Européen des Entreprises Vins** (CEEV – “Comité Vins”, www.ceev.be) represents the wine industry and trade in the European Union: *still wines, aromatised wines, sparkling wines, liqueur wines and other products of the vine*. It brings together 24 national organisations. With over 7,000 companies, mainly SMEs, and more than 200,000 direct jobs in the EU, its members produce and market the vast majority of European quality wines with and without geographical indications. They account for over 90% of European wine annual exports, which amounts to 6 billion € and contributes a surplus of 3 billion € to the EU balance of trade.