

09:15-09:30 Welcome: Marco Buti, Director-General,

Economic and Financial Affairs, European Commission

- Excellencies, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- It is my great pleasure and honour to welcome all of you to the 2009 edition of the Brussels Economic Forum this morning and to thank all the speakers and participants for being here and making this event a success.
- This year, the Brussels Economic Forum celebrates its 10th anniversary with a programme focusing on the new world which will emerge from the crisis.
- It will include sessions on the financial crisis, the global response to the crisis and the consequent design of a new rule book. There will also be a special session organised in co-operation with the Czech Presidency of the European Union on the sustainability of public finances, following the adoption of the 2009 Ageing Report by the European Commission.
- Thirty high-level speakers – ministers, European commissioners, leaders of international organisations, central bankers, and academics – will address both crisis and recovery and discuss strategies for restoring confidence in the economy while preserving growth.
- I am impressed by the level of attendance, which speaks of the relevance of the topics that you will be discussing in the coming days.

- One and half days is not that much time for what promises to be a fruitful and interesting debate, therefore, I will have to appeal to your punctuality.
- I am confident that you will rise to the challenge. And it is with this firm conviction that I declare this conference open, and wish you success in your deliberations.