



## **PRESS RELEASE**

# **EUROPEAN BUSINESS IN THAILAND LAUNCHES NEW PLATFORM: EUROPEAN-ASEAN BUSINESS CENTRE (EABC)**

*Bangkok, 18 January 2012* – The European business community in Thailand, with the support of the European Union, today launched a new platform to represent its interests. The European-ASEAN Business Centre (EABC) aims to contribute to the improvement of the trade and investment climate for European companies in Thailand and to increase trade, investment and establishment of European companies and businesses in Thailand.

Hosted by EABC President Mr Rolf-Dieter Daniel, Managing Director of Staedtler (Thailand), the event was presided over by H.E. Ambassador David Lipman, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Thailand, and H.E. Mr. Theerachai Puwanartnaranubala, Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Prime Minister H.E. Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra. More than 300 European and Thai business executives, diplomats and government representatives graced the launch event at the Sheraton Grande Sukhumvit Hotel.

The EABC's main activities will include carrying out policy and advocacy work, providing support to European businesses with trade related information and organizing key events to foster opportunities for European businesses in Thailand. EABC is part of a strategy of the European Union to support the internationalisation of European SMEs and other European enterprises enhancing market access in particular in emerging and fast growing markets such as Thailand and the ASEAN markets.

The EABC was established in consortium with sixteen business representative organisations and chambers of commerce, both in Thailand and Europe. The EABC has already established eight Advocacy Groups to facilitate market access and business co-operation. These groups are chaired by representatives of prominent European enterprises from various sectors, e.g. Diageo Moet Hennessy, GlaxoSmithKline, and Standard Chartered Bank. European companies are invited to join groups depending on their specific needs and interests.

“The European-ASEAN Business Centre will become the unified voice of European businesses in Thailand. With strong support from the European Union as well as our partners in Thailand and Europe, EABC will serve also as the platform for business to interact with authorities and counterparts in Thailand in order to improve trade and investment of Europe into Thailand and to promote Thailand and ASEAN as potential markets for European companies” said EABC President. Rolf-Dieter Daniel. “We look forward to working closely with European businesses, the Royal Thai Government, EU Institutions and Chambers of Commerce as well as counterparts in Thailand, in ASEAN, and in Europe”.

“I am very pleased that the project brings together for the first time all the EU bilateral chambers in Thailand under a single umbrella, hence creating a genuine forum for common European interests and a single voice for EU industry to express their issues,” said EU Ambassador David Lipman, “Most importantly, I believe that this initiative should be



welcomed as it is led by industry itself, and hence is representative of the views of industry actors.”

H.E. Mr. Theerachai Puwanartnaranubala, Minister of Finance, warmly welcomed the establishment of EABC. Recognising the importance of restoring investors’ confidence to ensure sustainability and contributing towards long-term competitiveness of Thailand, Thailand is committed to fostering closer ties with the EU. Given a pivotal role in broadening the horizon of opportunities and mutual benefits for both Thai and European businesses, EABC has challenging tasks ahead. On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, he wished EABC a great success with its endeavours.

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