

September 30 2008

The Czech-British Chamber of Commerce launches today

New platform for Czech-British economic relations

The newly formed Czech-British Chamber of Commerce will celebrate its official launch today. The Chamber will play a vital role in facilitating better economic relations between the UK and the Czech Republic.

The Czech Republic has become an increasingly important trading partner with the UK since its entry into the EU and over the last few years it has established itself as one of Europe's fastest growing economies. Its GDP growth of 6.5% in 2007 was more than double the EU's average of 2.6 %. This year GDP growth for the Czech Republic is 4.9%, outstripping the predicted EU average of 2% for the year (Eurostat).

With a population of just 10.2m, the Czech Republic punches above its weight as a trading partner for Europe's largest economies. It has the 9th largest export market in the EU and is the 29th largest export market to the UK. UK companies with major Czech operations include market leaders such as Vodafone, Tesco, International Power, Bovis Lend Lease and LogicaCMG. The role of the Chamber is to build on these strong relationships and develop new business ties in the future.

The Chamber is supported by major international companies, whose representatives will be present at the event, including ArcelorMittal, Budvar, Clifford Chance LLP, CGS Group, CP Holdings Ltd, Czech Airlines j.s.c., DLA Piper, Erste Bank, GlaxoSmithKline, MND Exploration & Production and SAB Miller.

The launch of the Chamber has also received the support of the UK Government's Minister of State for Trade and Investment, Lord Digby Jones. In his message of support Lord Digby Jones described the Czech-British Chamber of Commerce as "an important milestone in the continuing development of ever closer bilateral relations between our two countries".

The former UK Minister of State for Europe, Rt Hon Keith Vaz MP, will be one of the keynote speakers at the official launch of the Chamber at the Czech Embassy.

HE Jan Winkler, the Czech ambassador to the UK, and the Czech Embassy have been instrumental in the creation of the Czech-British Chamber of Commerce. The Chairman of the Czech-British Chamber of Commerce is Ladislav Hornan, Managing Partner of UHY Hacker Young, the UK accountancy group.

Ladislav Hornan says: "The Chamber will play an integral role in driving forward business relations between the two nations as well as offering practical support in creating business opportunities for both UK and Czech companies."

"Our intention is to make the Czech-British Chamber of Commerce an essential resource for any British business looking to expand into the Czech Republic and vice versa."

The newly established Chamber will provide:

A platform for the Czech and British business communities to network and develop their business interests.

Business and professional guidance and support.

Discussions with competent UK and Czech authorities on any issues affecting the development of trade and investment between the two countries.

A network of individuals and companies that facilitates and encourages advice, support and sharing of ideas.

Further membership benefits will include:

Events such as business breakfasts, key-note speakers, training initiatives, cultural events and seminars.

Promotion of the business, commercial, industrial and professional expertise of its members.

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Press enquiries:

Ladislav Hornan
Managing Partner
UHY Hacker Young
Tel: 020 7216 4600

Emily Jupp or Nick Mattison
Mattison Public Relations
Tel: 020 7645 3636