

## **PRESS RELEASE**

- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

### **Kick off for the CEN-CENELEC SMEs Working Group**

**Brussels, 4 February 2010** - The newly formed SME Working Group (SME WG) established by CEN (The European Committee for Standardization) and CENELEC (The European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization), met for the first time on 4 February 2010. The set-up of this new SME WG will allow closer monitoring of the actions targeting SMEs in the European standardization arena, and ensure their implementation and follow-up.

Born from a common will of both European standards organisations to continuously improve their efforts to facilitate the access of Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs) to standards work, this new SME WG aims to contribute to an increased competitiveness of European SMEs, which will enable them to strengthen the vital role they already play in the European economy.

CEN and CENELEC are committed to help SMEs get easier and safer access to standardization, as it provides European companies with a means to be competitive, thus allowing them access to state-of-the-art technology. Already in 2009, in order to address the issues SMEs face, two projects were started: the SME Standardization Toolkit (SMEST) and the SME Access to European Standardization project. The SME WG will look at their continued implementation and strive further for new actions and projects. The SME WG embodies CEN and CENELEC's commitment towards SMEs, acting as a platform to exchange ideas and best practices.

This high-level SME WG reports to the CEN-CENELEC administrative boards (known under the name of CAs). Convenor is Mike Low from the British Standards Institute (BSI), and the secretariat is held by Andreea Gulacsi from the CEN-CENELEC Management Centre.



**Seating from left to right:** Elena Santiago CID, Director General CCMC; Mike Low, Director Standards, BSI; Andreea, Gulacsi, Project Manager Innovation, CCMC; Ernst-Peter Ziethen, CEN Vice President Technical

Participants of this SME WG include stakeholders from CEN and CENELEC National members; DG Enterprise and Industry (DG ENTR) of the European Commission (more specifically from its Small and Medium Enterprises, and Standardization's units); the European Free Trade Association (EFTA); as well as CENELEC cooperating partner ORGALIME (The European Engineering Industries Association representing the interests of the Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic, Metalworking & Metal Articles Industries); and CEN Associated Partner, NORMAPME (European Office of Crafts, Trades and Small and Medium sized Enterprises for Standardisation).

The main objective of the SME WG is the follow-up of the CEN-CENELEC's 58 recommendations emanating from the "SME Access to standardization project" in better coordinating and monitoring their implementation.

The SME WG has the ambition to "make the difference", as Mike Low said, in reaching out to SMEs, SME trade associations and their related networks. For this, all stakeholders and interested parties, such as the European Standards Organisations, the European Commission and the national governments, need to join forces to work towards a common benefit: helping SMEs means helping the European market and economy.

For further information, please check CEN website page: [www.cen.eu](http://www.cen.eu)

## **ABOUT CEN**

The European Committee for Standardization (CEN) is a business facilitator in Europe, removing trade barriers for European industry and consumers. Its mission is to foster the European economy in global trading, the welfare of European citizens, and the environment. Through its services CEN provides a platform for the development of European Standards and other technical specifications.

CEN's 31 National Members work together to develop voluntary European Standards (ENs) in various sectors to build a European Internal Market for goods and services and to position Europe in the global economy. By supporting research, and helping disseminate innovation, standards are a powerful tool for economic growth. More than 60.000 technical experts as well as business federations, consumer and other societal interest organizations are involved in the CEN network that reaches over 480 million people.

For further information, please visit: [www.cen.eu](http://www.cen.eu)

## **ABOUT CENELEC**

The European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization is officially responsible for standardization in the electrotechnical field. In an ever more global economy, CENELEC fosters innovation and competitiveness, making technology available not only to major businesses but also to SMEs through the production of voluntary standards. CENELEC creates market access at the European level but also at the international level through its cooperation agreement with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC).

Through the work of its 31 Members together with its experts, the industry federations and consumers, Electrotechnical European Standards are created in order to help shape the European Internal Market, to encourage technological development, to ensure interoperability and to guarantee the safety and health of consumers and provide environmental protection.

Detailed information available at [www.cenelec.eu](http://www.cenelec.eu)

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