CEMR EMPLOYERS’ PLATFORM AND EPSU DRAFT JOINT STATEMENT ON THE EU EMPLOYMENT POLICY,

CEMR-EP and EPSU have recognised each other as social partners in 1996 and have since then been working to develop joint actions in the sector of local and regional government.

CEMR-EP and EPSU welcome the new employment guidelines, and especially the recognition of the central role of local government and of social partners in those guidelines.

CEMR-EP and EPSU have been active in strengthening and facilitating the implementation of the guidelines locally, not only for the overall employment strategy but specifically in the field of equal opportunities and new organisation of work. CEMR-EP and EPSU have issued several framework joint statements:

- in 1996 on modernisation of public services, where the social partners underlined the role of local and regional government in fostering entrepreneurship by creating an adequate framework through modernisation of public services,
- in 1997 on the EU employment policy and guidelines, emphasising the importance of the role of local government social partners and their wish to actively participate into the definition of national measures,
in 1998 on equal opportunities, where the social partners committed themselves to promote the principles of equal opportunities in local and regional government.

Additionally, CEMR has been active in developing together with the European Commission the «Acting locally for employment campaign» to which it will continue to give full support.

CEMR-EP and EPSU support the full employment objective as stated by the European Union in the conclusions of the Lisbon Council, as well as the necessity to integrate economic, social and employment policies.

In order to achieve these employment targets and to be in position to fulfil the role allocated by the Commission in the 2001 guidelines to the social partners at local and regional level, as partners of central government in implementing, monitoring and following-up employment strategy, CEMR-EP and EPSU call upon the Council and the Commission:

- to give recognition to the CEMR-EP and EPSU sectoral social dialogue joint committee. This committee would provide the necessary basis to ensure proper action of the social partners at local and regional government level. We urge the Commission to respond positively to the joint request of the social partners to create this Committee,
- to recognise the necessity of ensuring that the Member States set up mechanisms to involve the sectoral social partners, especially in the local and regional government sector, in their respective national action plans,
- that the sectoral social dialogue will remain a central priority for the Commission, as a necessary complement to the Tripartite social dialogue.

CEMR-EP and EPSU reaffirm their commitment to:

- contributing to the success of the employment policy. They have consequently created a joint working group on this issue and act at EU and national level to promote and support the actions of the social partners in local and regional government sector to achieve the EU targets,
- organise in particular national conferences and raising awareness programmes on equal opportunities building upon their joint statement of 1999,
- jointly work on issues such as life-long learning and the impact of information and communication technologies, including telework, on local government,
- enlarge these actions to social policy by contributing to the implementation of the EU social policy agenda, in which the role of local government and social partners is also recognised.

CEMR-EP and EPSU are committed to extend the social dialogue to include the social partners in CEEC. They have therefore agreed to organise a joint conference with the social partners in CEEC. They urge the Commission and Council to start a process that extends the Employment Guidelines and the
Social Policy Agenda to the countries of CEEC and involve the social partners fully in this process.

We therefore request that the Commission takes note of our commitment and future actions and consequently gives us the necessary tool to be full partners in this process through the creation of a sectoral dialogue joint committee for the local and regional government sector.

The Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) represents more than 100,000 local and regional authorities in Europe. The Employers platform of CEMR (CEMR-EP) represents the associations of local and regional authorities as employers in the public sector which provides in up to 25% of employment in some European countries.

The European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU) is a federation of the ETUC. It represents 10 million workers in more than 180 trade unions in Europe. These workers provide public service in health and social services, regional and central administration, energy, water and waste services.

Brussels, 15 November 2000