

**10th/11th May 2006, Frankfurt: 200 Participants Attend BME's International CPO Summit
FRANKFURT, Germany, May 11, 2006 --**

- Wim Kok: Europe Must Start Developing its Potential Now

Speaking at today's Chief Procurement Officer Summit currently being held in Frankfurt by the German Association of Materials Management, Purchasing and Logistics (BME e.V.), the former prime minister of the Netherlands Wim Kok stressed that Europe will have to make strenuous efforts if it is to become a more attractive location for the world's leading researchers, scientists and business practitioners. Speaking to an audience of around 200, Kok underlined the "vital importance" of better education and training systems. Determined steps must also be taken to promote information and communications technology and to analyse Europe's key industries. Kok went on to emphasise that "the swift implementation of the planned European Services Directive on trade in cross-border services is extremely important in finally moving towards a single internal market." In the context of global competition for jobs and industrial locations Europe cannot afford to waste its potential.

In his welcoming speech to European procurement officers, BME-Chairman Dr. Jürgen Marquard (Bosch Rexroth AG) stressed the important role played by procurement in securing global business competitiveness. There can be no doubt, in his view, that the full benefits of globalisation will only be realised by companies and corporate groups which are able to work most effectively and efficiently with the best suppliers in the world. According to Marquard this means that "corporate purchasing organisations will have to change if they are to achieve excellence in their strategies, structures and processes and to intensify and enhance the oft-cited virtues of corporate and supply chain synergies."

Around 30 European chief procurement officers (CPOs) will be talking about "the future of procurement" to the summit today and tomorrow. Speakers include Thomas W. Sidlik (DaimlerChrysler AG) and Kees Linse (Shell International). Sidlik, member of the DaimlerChrysler AG Board of Management and responsible for global purchasing, described the strategy of his company in the following words: "DaimlerChrysler aims to offer its partners opportunities for global growth and success. We are convinced that we provide the best suppliers with the opportunity of growing with us and becoming a firm part of our network." DaimlerChrysler's objective is to be its suppliers' first choice business partner. Sidlik: "Our strategy is to achieve open communication and to set transparent goals and standards." DaimlerChrysler rewards top performers with the opportunity of pursuing ongoing joint development with the company. Strong partnerships are particularly important during phases of weak business in particular.

Kees Linse, Director Group Contracting & Procurement with Shell International (Den Haag, NL) spoke on 11th May 2006 about corporate synergies. "Order management systems will entail changes. The professional buyer will no longer pursue the traditional approach of combining performance management with specific purchasing situations or contractual negotiations aimed at cutting costs," explains Linse. Instead, buyers will adopt an integrated approach based on stakeholder budget planning and data-dependent category and compliance management as the basis of a new purchasing concept. According to Linse "the best-in-class purchase organisation will be defined in terms of the way and extent to which companies are in a position to

actively control this change process and to exploit new opportunities which correspond with their business requirements.