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Brussels

Speech by Maxime Legrand at the Tripartite Social Summit

"Making Europe stronger in a changing world
that delivers for workers and enterprises"
Session: "A stronger Union economically and politically"

As President of CEC European Managers and representing the Liaison Committee with Eurocadres, I speak today for the joint representation of European managers.

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President von der Leyen, President Costa, Ministers, distinguished colleagues,

While some advance through financial and digital dominance — sometimes extended even through extraterritorial laws — others move forward through industrial planning and long-term strategy.

But there are not only two alternatives — and certainly not ones we should copy.
At CEC European Managers, we believe that a stronger Europe — economically and politically — must have the courage to define its own direction, guided by balance, ethics, and purpose.

A stronger Europe means **investing in both our people and our sovereignty** — mastering AI and quantum technologies, securing critical raw materials and clean energy, and ensuring that the green and digital transitions remain socially fair.

— Fair in a way that gives citizens reasons to be proud, and a sense of belonging to a shared community.

Because **competitiveness without cohesion is fragility — and cohesion without competitiveness is illusion.**

This is the scale on which Europe should be judged — not only by its growth, but by the quality, sustainability, and dignity of what it creates — in its work, in its products, and in the lives of its people.

That is where our pride should come from — from what we make, and from what we stand for.

Managers stand at the crossroads of this transformation.
They bring European ambitions to life — balancing performance with purpose, and ensuring that progress remains human.

But to play this role effectively, they need **clear, coherent, and stable rules.**
Predictability is not bureaucracy — it is the foundation of *trust, investment, and responsible leadership.*

Last year, at this very Summit, we called for a Europe that empowers its citizens through **financial education and the mobilisation of savings.**
One year later, I'm pleased to see the **European Commission's financial literacy strategy** — meaning that perhaps, we have been heard. That gives us energy to speak again today.

Because forming managers is essential — but listening to them when decisions are shaped is just as vital. They are not only the ones who implement change — they are the ones who make it possible, in companies and across all levels of society.

The same importance applies to **training** and to the **prevention of psychosocial risks** — both must be treated as strategic investments in *human sustainability, resilience,* and *leadership that lasts.*

Because a truly strong Union is one where *all employees are concerned* — where every person, from young professionals to senior leaders, can learn, grow, and contribute to our shared prosperity.

As we move towards **COP30**, where CEC European Managers will advocate for *sustainable leadership* and the *empowerment of younger generations*, our message remains simple:

— Europe must dare to lead — together — with intelligence, courage, and dignity — and to show the world that our model works, because it unites performance with purpose, and freedom with responsibility.

Thank you.

Maxime Legrand
CEC European Managers president