

Brussels, 14 January 2014

Subject: Breakfast on Digital Skills and Jobs at the WEF in Davos on 24 January 2014

Dear Mr. Gnodde,

We would like to invite you for a breakfast during the World Economic Forum in Davos on 24 January 2014, from 7h30-8h30 at Sunstar Alpine Hotel Davos. Together with a small group of top business leaders, we would like to discuss with you ways to boost digital skills and jobs creation in ICT sector in Europe.

The digital economy is creating jobs at an unabated pace and will be a key sector in Europe's economic recovery. Even throughout the crisis, demand for ICT professionals grew at about 3% per year. But even, at a time of high unemployment, many ICT vacancies are difficult to fill, as you may well have experienced at first hand in your own organisations.

We cannot reap the full growth potential of the digital economy if we do not have the people with the right skills. Too few youngsters are choosing ICT as a career. Our education and training systems are too slow to react to new demands and challenges. According to forecasts, this problem is going to get worse over the coming years if nothing is done.

It is time to act. This problem can only be addressed through the joint efforts of all stakeholders and industry has a core role to play. At last year's World Economic Forum, we launched a call to action, to "turn the tide". Already back then, several companies agreed to take up the challenge. We would like to thank these partners and all those who have since followed suit.

This first initiative has evolved into the "[Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs](#)", a multi-stakeholder partnership intended to increase ICT education and training, raise awareness of ICT as a career and to promote cross-border mobility of ICT workers, which was launched by the European Commission in March 2013. In the framework of the Grand Coalition stakeholders can "pledge" concrete actions in any of these areas. More than [40 pledges](#) have been received so far. At the European Council in October, the Heads of State and Government of all EU Member States called for the strengthening this Grand Coalition and several national initiatives are already underway.

Now is the time to step up our collective efforts and to effectively deliver the pledges made. We have a responsibility to ensure that our young people receive the skills they need in order to find the jobs they deserve. Only by delivering thousands more additional training, internship and job opportunities, can we rise to the challenge. This is an issue of the highest importance; it needs to be dealt with at the highest level. This is why we wanted to invite you personally to this breakfast discussion.

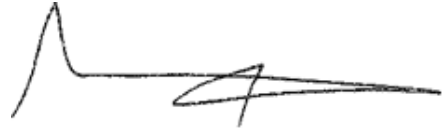
Richard J Gnodde
Goldman Sachs International, Co-Chief Executive Officer
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Over the coming months, we plan to scale up the activities of the Grand Coalition. To do so, we are seeking commitments from CEOs and political leaders to pledge substantial support for the Grand Coalition for Digital Jobs. We are also aiming to widen the membership to additional ICT and ICT-using companies. Please find enclosed a short paper with suggestions for discussion as to how to take this joint initiative forward.

We are looking forward to meeting you for a delightful Swiss breakfast.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a horizontal line and a small dot at the end.

José Manuel Barroso

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a sharp peak followed by a horizontal line and a small loop at the end.

Neelie Kroes