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Invitation ABCDE conference

The World Bank, the Belgian Prime Minister and the Belgian Minister for Development Cooperation

Would like to invite you to:

The Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics (ABCDE) - Europe

In Brussels on 10th and 11th of May

Accreditation procedure for press is open, please register now!

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BRUSSELS, 21 April The Annual Bank Conference on Development Economics in Europe (ABCDE-Europe) is a major forum on international development, organized yearly by the World Bank, this year in partnership with the Belgian government. It is a unique platform for many of the world's finest development thinkers and experienced policymakers to present their perspectives, ideas, and to challenge researchers and senior staff of the World Bank and other multilateral organizations with their views. The theme of the two-day forum is Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg: are we on track?, discussing what migration flows, the investment climate, trade and harmonized aid can contribute to the fight against worldwide poverty. On May 10 and 11 around 450 thinkers, as well as doers and policy makers participate will gather in Brussels for this event. The forum will be held at a crucial juncture in time. With ten new countries joining the European Union on May 1st, this could be called the era of the New Europe. What is the role of this new Europe in the global arena which is still largely determined by poverty, inequality and economic and social exclusion of a large part of the world population? Speakers at the ABCDE in Brussels who will address these issues as well as other development issues include: James D. Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of Belgium Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel laureate and professor at Columbia University (NY) Romano Prodi, President of the European Commission Ali Babacan, Minister for Economy, Turkey-and many others-The ABCDE-Europe has been designed to expand the flow of ideas between thinkers, practitioners and policymakers within international development, and to provide a forum for discussion on key international development issues. By bringing together an array of academics, politicians, institutes, think tanks, civil society organizations, trade unions, businesses and journalists, the ABCDE-Europe provides an excellent opportunity to foster exchange of knowledge on and understanding of development issues and globalisation. On Tuesday 11th of May, the winners of the European Essay Competition -an initiative of the World Bank and the College of Europe in Bruges, in partnership with Universidad Europea de Madrid and AEGEE will receive their awards from the President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn and the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi. This competition invited young people, aged between 19 and 25, to share their concrete and thoughtful proposals outlining the role of Europe in the old and new challenges of poverty and development worldwide. The registration procedure for media is now open on the website: www.worldbank.org/abcde-europe [under press info] What: ABCDE Brussels, all conference sessions will be open to the media. The conference program is available at: www.worldbank.org/abcde-europe When: May 10 and 11, 2004 Where: Palais d'Egmont 8, Place du Petit Sablon 1000 Brussels, Belgium How to register : To obtain accreditation to the conference,

journalists must complete the registration form at: www.worldbank.org/abcde-europe [under press info]
Registration deadline: May 6, 5:00 PM (17:00 hs CET) Journalists will receive confirmation by email or phone that they have been approved for accreditation. Registered press in Belgium (EU, Brussels-based or Belgian press) need to provide their official press accreditation number. Those approved for accreditation will be able to pick up badges at the conference site starting from 8:30am on Monday May 10th. They will be required to present their press credentials bearing a photograph when picking up their meeting badge. To be accredited, you must hold valid press credentials or provide substantive evidence of professional bona fides. There will be a press room at the conference venue with few computers connected to the Internet, power outlets, 1 fax as well as 5 phone lines journalists can use with laptops on a first-come-first-served basis. TV crews interested in covering the conference are invited to get in contact with Angela Bekkers or Zoltàn Agai (see contact details page 1). Journalists planning to cover the ABCDE-conference are responsible for making their own hotel arrangements. There is an arrangement and special World Bank rate with the Hilton hotel in Brussels (walking distance from the venue). Please contact Ms. Jenny Coleman by Email: jenny.coleman@forum-europe.com.