PRESS RELEASE

Industrial innovation policy is needed to keep Europe in the lead in the global technology race

European innovation successfully strengthened by MEDEA+, CATRENE and AENEAS

Paris, December 3rd, 2008 – The European Nanoelectronics Forum 2008, was held in Paris on December 2 and 3, and successfully gathered more than 300 key players from the field. It was a common event organized by MEDEA+ / CATRENE, the EUREKA cluster programmes, ENIAC, the European Technology Platform on Nanoelectronics and AENEAS, the Association of R&D actors in nanoelectronics.

During the Forum, a clear message was sent out on the importance of creating a European industrial innovation policy to maintain Europe's knowledge leadership in advanced micro- and nanoelectronics, and also of forming strong alliances for its implementation.

"The time to act is now. To remain at the top when it comes to innovation, the European Semiconductor Industry must cope with a changed landscape. Europe's economy will become increasingly knowledge-based. In order to fulfil the objectives of the Lisbon strategy and sustain our European core values, we must keep the command of semiconductor technology, which underpins the developments of the Information Society. The European Semiconductor Industry has already proven its capabilities and is leading the market in several fields such as wireless components and automotive electronics. We must keep this momentum and increase it in several other fields, keeping our vision alive even in these difficult times." said Alain Dutheil, President of AENEAS.

The Semiconductor Industry is in fact crucial for European economic growth and prosperity as it directly enables approximately 10% of the global GDP. Yet, traditional technology leaders such as Europe, the USA and Japan, are faced with the rise of emerging competitors that are successfully attracting international business with financially advantageous operating conditions. And this is not the only challenge. Closer to home, the European economic environment is proving to be less and less adapted to globalised worldwide markets. The European Semiconductor Industry can only be competitive if it competes in the same local economic and policy environment as the other semiconductor regions in the world.

Large European industrial alliances have been formed to address European competitiveness in the sector. For nearly twenty years, programmes such as JESSI, MEDEA and MEDEA+, and today the new programmes CATRENE and the ENIAC Joint Undertaking have made significant contributions to establishing and maintaining European leadership in nanoelectronics R&D ranging from smart card and image sensing technologies to automotive electronics. They embrace all key actors in the value chain – including applications, technology, materials and equipment suppliers – as well as involving industrial companies of all sizes, universities and other research institutions and Public Authorities.

Today, however, they are all raising the same concerns for the future of this crucial sector for Europe.

The Chairman of CATRENE, Enrico Villa, stated that *"The common vision of the industry is to reinforce the global competitive position of the European electronic food chain by leveraging its competitive advantages and its local industrial infrastructure"*, but he also reminded that *"competitiveness in today's changing landscape requires adaptation. Europe's Semiconductor companies and all the associated players are working on this by reassessing their strategies, by forming new alliances for research and by developing new market opportunities linked to social needs with a high technology potential*".

It is important that a common European industrial innovation policy for the entire Semiconductor value chain be established, not only with the collaboration of R&D actors but also with the full support of the European Commission and National States.

As stipulated in the recent “ESIA 2008 Competitiveness Report”, such a policy should redefine technology and business strategies for the Semiconductor industry and include four important pillars: an enlarged effort on R&D and an increase in R&D funding; a renewal in semiconductor manufacturing; the creation of new market opportunities; and a focus on attracting a highly skilled work-force and encouraging more students to complete technological studies. By inciting a clear vision, the semiconductor industry can create new markets and concentrate on maintaining advanced knowledge leadership.

About CATRENE

The recent EUREKA programme CATRENE (Cluster for Application and Technology Research in Europe on NanoElectronics) aims at a Technological Leadership for a competitive European ICT industry. CATRENE is a four-year programme, having started 01 January 2008, and is extendable by another four years. This is in line with the changing landscape of the semiconductor industry as well as with the present view on technology evolution and the time span over which most of the major applications will develop. Resources required will be approximately 4,000 person-years annually, equivalent to about € 6 billion for the extended programme.

For more information on CATRENE visit http://www.catrene.org

About AENEAS

Established in November 2006, AENEAS (Association for European NanoElectronics ActivitieS) is a non-profit industrial association. It provides a legal backbone to the European Technology Platform on Nanoelectronics (ENIAC) and carries forth its mission and activities, allowing AENEAS members to co-define the future contents of the ENIAC Strategic Research Agenda.

European R&D performers in nanoelectronics associated to AENEAS also participate in the ENIAC Joint Undertaking, a public-private partnership with the European Commission, Member States and Associated States. Aim of this partnership is to implement key parts of the ENIAC Strategic Research Agenda by Joint Technology Initiatives, a major new mechanism in the European Framework Programme. The first ENIAC call for project proposals was launched in May 2008.

Currently, there are 75 members in AENEAS. Participation in the association is open to all European key players in Nanoelectronics, whether large industry, small and medium enterprises, research institutes, academia, associations or natural persons.

More information on AENEAS can be found at:
http://www.eniac.eu/web/aeneas/aeneas_ex.php