



23 November 2011

GAVIN HEWITT TAKES UP ROLE AS PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN SPIRITS ORGANISATION - CEPS

Gavin Hewitt, chief executive of the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA), has been elected President of the European Spirits Organisation - CEPS.

The European Spirits Organisation - CEPS represents the spirits industry at European level. Its membership comprises 30 national associations representing the industry in 26 countries, as well as a group of leading spirits producing companies.

Mr Hewitt has been chief executive of the SWA since October 2003. Prior to joining the spirits sector, he had been the British Ambassador to Croatia, to Finland and to Belgium.

During his two-year term of office, starting today, Mr Hewitt said his priorities will be:

- To promote, protect and grow the European spirits industry in the EU and in third markets;
- To demonstrate the EU spirit industry's commitment to social responsibility, including compliance with regulations on advertising and promotion of alcohol, and to advocate responsible consumption;
- To ensure the EU institutions understand the economic importance of the spirits industry and do not discriminate against spirits by comparison with other alcoholic beverages in rules and regulations.

Mr Hewitt said: "I'm delighted to take on this role which will help ensure the European spirits industry, including Scotch Whisky companies, is well represented in Europe. As an industry, we work with the European Union across a whole range of areas, from encouraging trade to showing our commitment to social responsibility. The role of president of European Spirits Organisation - CEPS complements my full-time position as chief executive of the Scotch Whisky Association."

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To find out more about the European Spirits Organisation - CEPS, please visit <http://www.europeanspirits.org/>

To find out more about the Scotch Whisky Association, please visit <http://www.scotch-whisky.org.uk>