Slide 1 – intro

As one can read from the agenda, the conclusions of this meeting will serve to establish an action plan to coordinate the operations of stakeholders in standardization to convince policy makers of the importance of standardization for the economy of their country. I believe we achieved this in Europe and this is why I like to share our experience and provide you with a few elements on the links would between standards and regulations in Europe and the European approach for better regulation through the use of voluntary standards.

Slide 2

There are a few fundamental principles at the core of our model which allows standards to support EU policies

First, the standardization process is driven by the market and standards are voluntary in application

We also put an emphasis on transparency, openness, inclusiveness, consensus between the different stakeholders, coherence and alignment with international standards developed by ISO and IEC.

Slide 3

We have a Regulation in Europe, applicable since January 2013, which sets the legal framework for standardization in Europe. It has introduced a very important number of requirements for CEN and CENELEC, as well as for its members, amongst other parties.

It regulate a few important element such as:

• Cooperation between ESOs, NSBs, Member States and EC
• Establishment of European standards and other deliverables
• Identification of ICT technical specifications for referencing (in public procurement)
• financing of European standardisation and
• stakeholder participation in European standardisation

Slide 4
This regulation EU Regulation 1025 re-confirms the clear link between European law (mandatory) and European standards (voluntary)

The European law provides high-level objectives (notably health & safety) to be met by products on the European market

European regulators request European Standardization Organizations to develop solutions supporting the achievement of the requirements they have set

The 3 European Standardization Organizations have clear rules in place to ensure the coordination of their work when needed (=> no duplication, resource-effective system)

European standards, once harmonized, can grant presumption of conformity with the requirements of harmonization legislation (support to compliance)

European standards provide state-of-the-art solutions helping market operators comply with European law, but they also leave them free to choose other solutions. It’s an obligation for CEN and CENELEC members to adopt European standards on their respective territories, BUT ENs remain voluntary in application

This system is highly flexible: Requirements are relatively stable, but technology evolves in a fast manner: the indirect reference model used in Europe supports a coherent regional market while fostering innovation

Slide 5

Here are some key assets of the European approach:

Standards as a co-regulation tool
On one side, we have Legislation which focuses on essential requirements,
And on the other side, stakeholders agree by consensus on concrete ways to produce safe and compliant products and services

Early notification of stakeholders
Stakeholders are notified very early in the standardization process. First the European Commission releases every year its Annual Union WP. Then, the ESOs, based on the EC WP, respond to these policies in their annual WP. This is followed by standardization requests made by the EC to the ESOs. So, this process allows Stakeholders to know well in advance when & where they need to contribute

Indirect references to standards
EU Legislation only makes indirect references to standards. This allows standards to remain market relevant, flexible and enables them to support innovation. Flexibility & support to innovation
Strong connection with international standardization work
And of course, we ensure strong connections and coordination with the international standardization work, through our Vienna and Dresden agreement. As an example, when CEN and CENELEC discuss standardization requests with The European Commission, we always involve ISO and IEC at a very early stage in order to assess the possibility that the development of ENs in support of EU legislation are developed at international level.

Slide 6
Alignment with ISO & IEC fundamental for CEN and CENELEC. Here is the situation for CEN only, but one can see that this level of alignment is pretty high, even though some constraints, linked amongst others to EU legislation, prevent us from further alignment in some sectors.

Slide 7
Last year, we have developed a European Guide on Standards and Regulation - Better regulation through the use of voluntary standards - Guidance for policy makers.

This guide is publicly available on our website and it has 4 main objectives:

• describe the role of voluntary standards vis-à-vis public authorities’ legislation and policy;

• clarify the benefits of using voluntary standards to support the implementation of legislation and policy and the ways in which this can be achieved;

• give current examples of how standards complement legislation and policy;

• explain the processes of standards development where standards support compliance with legislation and policy in addition to their market function.

I encourage you to read this guide as it may provide you with insight on how we operate in Europe that may help you in convincing your policy makers of the importance of standardization for the economy.