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PRESS RELEASE

Overcoming the crisis. Europe's black holes, Obama' hope and Russia's game

Berlin, April 17, 2009 – Aspen Institute Italia is organizing the international conference “*Europe on the edge: the weak links and the Russia link*”, at the Adlon Kempinski Hotel in Berlin, on April 17-18.

The conference takes place behind closed doors. A **Meeting with the Press is scheduled on Friday, April 17, at 2:15 pm.** Outside program hours, and upon communicating with the Institute's press office, journalists can interview single participants.

The conference opens with an analysis of how the European Union is faring in the midst of a global financial crisis. Will Europe emerge strengthened or will it fall apart? Discussion will focus on the validity of the social economic model, state aid, barriers to budgets, and the usefulness of Eurobonds. The unemployment nightmare, political instability and threats to the Eurozone's solidity are other topics under debate, during the second session. The conference closes with an analysis of the evolution of relations between Europe, Russia and the United States, with a particular focus on Obama's overtures to Russia. In this framework, Europe has a key strategic role to play, which must succeed in going beyond the energy question, despite that issue's undeniable importance.

Participants include: **Giulio Tremonti**, Minister of Economy and Finance; Chairman, Aspen Institute Italia, Rome; **Lorenzo Bini Smaghi**, Member of the Executive Board, European Central Bank, Frankfurt; **Jean-Paul Fitoussi**, Member, Economic Advisory Council, EBRD; President, OFCE, Paris; **Dieter Rampl**, Chairman, UniCredit Group, Milan; **Eckart Von Klaeden**, Foreign Policy Spokesman CDU/CSU, Deutscher Bundestag, Berlin; **Oksana Antonenko**, Senior Fellow, Program Director (Russia and Eurasia), International Institute for Strategic Studies, London; **Leszek Balcerowicz**, Professor of Economics, Warsaw School of Economics, Warsaw; **Katinka Barysch**, Chief Economist, Centre for European Reform, London; **Franco Bassanini**, President, Astrid; Chairman, Cassa Depositi e Prestiti, Rome; **Margherita Boniver**, Member of the Italian Parliament, Rome; **Richard Burt**, Senior Director, McLarty Associates, Washington, DC; **Gianni De Michelis**, Member of the European Parliament, Rome; **William M. Drozdiak**, President, American Council on Germany, New York; **Marcus Ederer**, Director General, Policy Planning Staff, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin; **Victor Elbling**, Head of International Energy Policy,

Globalization and Sustainable Development, Federal Foreign Office, Berlin; **Jacob A. Frenkel**, Chairman and CEO, Group of Thirty (G-30), New York; **Gianluca Garbi**, Head of Global Public Sector, Dresdner Kleinwort; Chairman, Dresdner Finanziaria (Italy), London; **Piero Gnudi**, Chairman, Enel, Rome; **Heather Grabbe**, Director, Open Society Institute, Brussels; **Vittorio Grilli**, Director General of the Treasury, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Rome; **Daniel Gros**, Director, CEPS, Brussels; **Ulrike Guerot**, Head of the Berlin Office and Senior Research Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin; **Raphael Hadas-Lebel**, Chamber President, Conseil d'Etat, Paris; **Gary Hart**, Co-Chair, The Commission on U.S. Policy, Denver; **Josef Joffe**, Publisher, *Die Zeit*, Hamburg; **Andrey V. Kortounov**, President, New Eurasia Foundation, Moscow; **Fiorella Kostoris**, Professor of Economic Policy, "La Sapienza" University, Rome; **Ivan Krastev**, Chairman of the Board, Centre for Liberal Strategies, Sofia; **Charles Kupchan**, Senior Fellow and Director Europe Studies, Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, DC; **Giorgio La Malfa**, Member of the Italian Parliament, Rome; **Axel Lebahn**, Russiacounseling, Göttingen; **Fyodor Lukyanov**, Editor in Chief, *Russia in Global Affairs*, Moscow; **Edward N. Luttwak**, Senior Fellow, Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC; **Rory MacFarquhar**, Managing Director, Director of New Markets Economic Research, Goldman Sachs, Moscow; **Pier Carlo Padoan**, Deputy Secretary General, OECD, Paris; **Alexander Rahr**, Program Director Russia/Eurasia, German Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin; **Otto Schily**, Member of the Bundestag, Deutsche Bundestag, Berlin; **Ulrich Stefan Schlie**, Director, Policy Planning Staff, Federal Ministry of Defence, Berlin; **Peter W. Schulze**, Professor of International Relations, Georg August University, Göttingen; **Daniela Schwarzer**, Head, Research Division for European Integration, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Berlin; **Dimitri K. Simes**, President, The Nixon Center, Washington, DC; **Konstantin Simonov**, Director General, National Energy Security Fund, Moscow; **Constanze Stelzemüller**, Director, The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Berlin; **Fritjof Von Nordenskjöld**, Executive Vice President, German Council on Foreign Relations, Berlin; **Manfred Weber**, General Manager and Member of the Board of Directors, Association of German Banks, Berlin; **Igor Yurgens**, Chairman of the Management Board, Institute of Contemporary Development, Moscow; **Salvatore Zecchini**, Chairman, Gestore Mercato Elettrico, Milan.