



Committee on International Trade
The Chairman

ACCES RESERVE

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CONFIDENTIAL

Jerzy BUZEK
Chair
Conference of Committee Chairs

Dear Mr BUZEK,

In accordance with Rule 118 of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament, the Committee on International Trade held a public hearing on Monday 29 September 2014 with Ms Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner-designate, who, subject to the positive outcome of the nomination procedure, will be responsible for the EU Trade policy.

Prior to the hearing, Parliament had sent the Commissioner-designate a list of written questions. My committee noted that Ms Cecilia Malmström answered those questions and duly dealt with all the priorities outlined.

Ms Malmström opened the hearing by making a statement in which she referred to the following four principles which would guide trade policy under her leadership:

1. trade policy driven by the interests of the citizens;
2. trade negotiations should be open and transparent;
3. trade policy is about cooperation meaning trade agreements should support protection of the environment, labour rights and human rights in general whilst at the same time promoting EU interests by ensuring reciprocal concessions and enforcing the rules;
4. trade is a powerful foreign policy tool which must promote EU values throughout the world.

Members then asked questions on a wide range of subjects and ongoing trade negotiations and they focused in particular on:

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement;
Investor to State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) provisions in Free Trade Agreements (namely TTIP, CETA, Singapore);
Policy coherence between trade and other objectives;
Transparency and access to documents;
Data protection;
Public Services in trade agreements;
Trade and sustainable development issues;
China's market economy status.

During the debate, Ms Malmström made the following specific commitments regarding her future Commission portfolio.

Access to negotiating documents - all members of the house would be able to consult the negotiating documents provided that modalities are agreed which would ensure confidentiality of the information.

On transparency she committed to wide ranging measures vis-à-vis the Parliament and the public and to treat this as a personal priority.

On Public services, she committed to ensuring that they are and will be excluded from all on-going and future trade agreements.

She also committed to implementation of trade agreements through thorough monitoring and evaluation of them whilst sharing information and closely cooperating with the Parliament.

Before the end of the hearing, the Commissioner-designate made a brief closing statement in which she reaffirmed that the multilateral agenda was her absolute priority and that she would be focusing all her efforts in that regard over the coming weeks.

It should be noted that during the hearing Ms Malmström also replied to questions by the invited committees – the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Development.

At their meeting on evaluation of the hearing, held on 29 September at 18.30, the INTA Coordinators were unable to reach a consensus mainly due to the following concerns:

1. the unclear position of the Commissioner-designate regarding the ISDS provisions in trade agreements;
2. the alleged undermining or delaying the EU data protection reform in 2012 by the Commissioner-designate.

Given the fact that no consensus was reached at the Coordinators' meeting and following a request by the GUE group, a full committee meeting on evaluation was convened for 30 September at 12.00.

Before that meeting, Ms Malmström provided a written explanation with regard to the data protection concern. This explanation was considered satisfactory by the political groups that requested it.

With regard to the second concern the S&D group requested that a clarification of the position of the future College with regard to the ISDS provisions in free trade agreements be provided by the Commission's President-elect before the plenary vote on consent to the appointment, as a body, of the President-elect and Commissioners-designate.

Following a brief discussion in the full committee meeting and in accordance with Annex XVI of the Rules of Procedure INTA held two votes - first on whether the Commissioner-designate is qualified to be a member of the College and second, whether the Commissioner-designate is qualified to carry out the duties of the EU Commissioner for Trade. In both votes, the majority of INTA Members voted in favour.

Therefore, the general outcome of this hearing is that the Commissioner-designate is apt to be a member of the College of Commissioners and to carry out the specific tasks assigned to her.

This represents the opinion of a large majority of the Members who attended the hearing.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bernd Lange'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Bernd Lange