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THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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## **PRESS RELEASE**

3112th Council meeting

### **Foreign Affairs/Trade**

Brussels, 26 September 2011

President

**Mr Marcin KOROLEC**

Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs of  
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# **P R E S S**

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## **Main results of the Council**

*The Council reconfirmed its strong commitment to a successful outcome to the **Doha round** of world trade negotiations. With a view to the WTO ministerial conference in December, it called on WTO members to seek a way out of the current impasse in the talks, whilst building on the progress already made.*

*The Council assessed prospects for the conclusion of negotiations on free trade agreements with **India** and **Ukraine**, and took note of progress in negotiations on **Russia's** accession to the WTO. It took stock of initiatives aimed at strengthening trade relations with the countries of the **southern Mediterranean**, as part of the EU's efforts to support democratic and economic transition in the region.*

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- Where declarations, conclusions or resolutions have been formally adopted by the Council, this is indicated in the heading for the item concerned and the text is placed between quotation marks.
- Documents for which references are given in the text are available on the Council's Internet site (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu>).
- Acts adopted with statements for the Council minutes which may be released to the public are indicated by an asterisk; these statements are available on the Council's Internet site or may be obtained from the Press Office.

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Mr Karel DE GUCHT

Member

**ITEMS DEBATED****WTO TRADE NEGOTIATIONS - DOHA DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

The Council took stock of developments in multilateral trade negotiations under the WTO's Doha Development Agenda in the run-up to, for the eighth WTO ministerial conference, scheduled to take place in Geneva on 15 to 17 December.

Launched in Doha in 2001, the negotiations are aimed at achieving a major reform of the international trading system and improving the trading prospects of developing countries. The talks have however remained in an impasse since 2008 in the absence of an agreement on "*modalities*", which would transpose political commitments made by WTO members into figures.

The Council reconfirmed the EU's strong commitment to a successful outcome to the Doha round and to the ministerial conference in December, as well as the importance it attaches to the multilateral trading system. The EU's objective has long been to obtain an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced agreement. The Council therefore urged WTO members to find a way out of the current impasse.

To this end, it supported the suggestion that the Commission, together with other WTO members, should explore ways to advance the negotiating agenda in accordance with the mandate agreed at Doha, while building on progress already made. It reiterated the EU's commitment to achieving real results that would address the needs and interests of the least developed countries.

**ACCESSION OF RUSSIA TO THE WTO**

The Council was briefed by the Commission on recent developments concerning Russia's planned accession to the WTO.

The Council underscored the importance of the negotiations, welcomed progress achieved and discussed possible solutions to bilateral and multilateral issues that remain to be resolved. It expressed support for the Commission's efforts to ensure that the process can be completed in time for a decision to be taken at the eighth WTO ministerial conference, scheduled to take place in Geneva on 15 to 17 December.

**EU-INDIA FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

The Council assessed progress made in negotiations with India on a free trade agreement.

It agreed on the need for an ambitious and comprehensive outcome so that would bring significant economic benefits to both parties. The Council looked forward to examining the individual elements in greater detail in order to assess the overall value of a possible agreement, and called for an early start to discussions on the issue of investment.

The agreement is being negotiated by the Commission on the basis of a mandate granted by the Council in 2007. It is intended to improve market access for goods and services, with binding provisions in areas relevant for trade and investment, and to provide for cooperation on trade issues related to sustainable development.

**EU-UKRAINE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT**

The Commission briefed the Council on the state of negotiations with Ukraine on a free trade agreement following the meeting on 21 September between Ukrainian vice prime minister Andriy Klyuev and commissioners Karel De Gucht and Dacian Ciolos

It expressed support for the Commission's efforts to reach an ambitious and balanced agreement, and welcomed the Commission's intention to conclude negotiations by the end of the year.

The Commission is conducting the negotiations on the basis of a mandate granted by the Council in 2007 for an enhanced agreement on economic integration and political cooperation. It is expected that the establishment of a free trade area, together with approximation to EU standards, will contribute to the gradual integration of Ukraine into the EU single market.

**TRADE RELATIONS WITH THE SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN**

The Council was briefed by the Commission on initiatives aimed at strengthening trade relations with the countries of the southern Mediterranean.

It reemphasised the importance of using trade and investment instruments as part of the EU's efforts to support democratic and economic transition in the region.

The Council highlighted the importance of concluding an agreement with Morocco on agriculture, processed agricultural products and fisheries products. It noted the Commission's intention to present draft mandates next month for the negotiation of agreements on "deep and comprehensive" free trade areas with Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. The Council recognised that the launch of these negotiations will depend on the interest and readiness of each partner country.

**OTHER BUSINESS****Agreements with Peru/Columbia and Central America**

Ministers, over lunch, were informed by the Commission of:

- the approval of proposals for Council decisions on the signing and conclusion of a multipartite free trade agreement with Columbia and Peru;
- the forthcoming approval of proposals for Council decisions on the signing and conclusion of an association agreement with Central America
- the preparation of proposals for regulations on the implementation of safeguard clauses contained in these agreements.

The two agreements were initialled last March. Based on the principle of regional integration, the multipartite agreement with Columbia and Peru remains open for signature by Ecuador and Bolivia, the other two members of the Andean Community. As for the agreement with Central America (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama), it is the first "region-to-region" association agreement to be initialled by the EU.

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Over lunch, ministers also discussed developments in the EU's trade and investment relations with **China** and the **United States**.

## **OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**

### **FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

#### **Restrictive measures - Somalia**

The Council amended restrictive measures concerning Somalia, implementing UN Security Council resolution 2002 (2011).

It extended the designation criteria to include the use of children in armed conflicts in Somalia, and those responsible for targeting civilians in situations of armed conflict. At the same time, it clarified an exemption from the asset freeze for funds necessary to ensure the timely delivery of urgently needed humanitarian assistance. Following a decision of the UN sanctions committee concerning Somalia, the Council also updated the list of persons and entities subject to restrictive measures.

### **DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

#### **Fiji Islands**

The Council amended and prolonged the appropriate measures for the Republic of the Fiji Islands until 30 September 2012 ([13845/11](#)). The measures were first imposed on 1 October 2007 in the wake of the military takeover in Fiji in 2006. They make the resumption of full development cooperation conditional on concrete steps towards new elections as well as the respect of human rights and the rule of law.

### **TRANSPORT**

#### **Aviation safety agreement with Brazil\***

The Council approved the conclusion of an agreement on civil aviation safety with Brazil, following the European Parliament's consent ([13989/1/10 REV 1](#), [14289/11](#), [11282/10](#)).

The agreement, signed in July 2010, provides for the mutual recognition of certification findings and approvals as regards the airworthiness of civil aeronautical products, services and manufacturing and maintenance organisations. It is intended to promote cooperation and increase efficiency in matters relating to civil aviation safety, so as to enhance safety and environmental quality and facilitate the exchange of civil aeronautical products.

### **Aircraft maintenance**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation updating the training, examination, knowledge and experience requirements for the issuance of aircraft maintenance licences, and adapting these requirements to the complexity of the different categories of aircraft ([13082/11](#) + [ADD 1](#)).

The draft regulation, which amends regulation of 2042/2003 on the continuing airworthiness of aircraft, is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny; now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it, unless the European Parliament objects.

### **Security scanners at airports**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation allowing the use of security scanners for passenger screening at EU airports ([13081/11](#)).

To safeguard citizens' health, only scanners which do not use ionising radiation will be authorised at this stage. Specific rules on how to use this screening method will be adopted separately, in particular to ensure the protection of personal data and privacy.

The draft regulation is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny; now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it, unless the European Parliament objects.

### **Aircrew**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation laying down detailed rules concerning pilots' licences, the certification of persons involved in the training and assessing of pilots, medical certificates for pilots, the certification of aero-medical examiners and the assessment of the medical fitness of cabin crew members ([12964/11](#)).

The draft regulation is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny; now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it, unless the European Parliament objects.

## **Marine accident investigations**

The Council decided not to oppose the adoption by the Commission of a regulation setting out a common methodology for investigative bodies of the member states in conducting investigations on marine accidents ([13126/11](#)).

Under directive 2009/18/EC on the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector, the Commission has to adopt a common methodology for investigating marine casualties and incidents to be followed by investigative bodies when carrying out safety investigations.

The draft regulation is subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny. This means that now that the Council has given its consent, the Commission may adopt it, unless the European Parliament objects.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### **European Globalisation Adjustment Fund - Denmark**

The Council adopted a decision mobilising a total amount of EUR 3.9 million under the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, providing support for workers made redundant in Denmark.

The amount will be allocated to dismissed workers in the Danish machinery and equipment manufacturing sector, following the relocation of the production of wind turbines to third countries in the context of major structural changes in world trade patterns.

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