

 <p>Council of the European Union General Secretariat</p>	
Trade Policy Committee	
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13th Round of EGA negotiations

(m.d. 75/16 Rev1)

Position of BULGARIA

Bulgarian authorities consider that the further advancing of the EGA negotiations to the next stage, i.e. expressing readiness for immediate or graduate tariff elimination is a natural step towards intensification and finalization of the technical work.

However, a step like this needs particular attention, especially when consensus regarding the scope and the entire list of green goods has not yet been reached. We express our concerns of the large number of sensitive products *per se* (irrespective how these are indicated – “C” sensitive, “B” staging or “A” immediate elimination) in the proposed EU staging offer (m.d. 75/16Rev1), despite the fact that Member States have stated their particular conditions since the launch of the EGA negotiations.

It should be taken into account that the anticipated conclusion of the agreement, as well as its entry into force in 2017 will influence the balance of interests and the ongoing free trade negotiations with Japan and US. In this regard, we would like once again to emphasize that for Bulgaria and EU it is important to keep goods with tariffs bound at or above 5 per cent for the bilateral or multilateral negotiations. Otherwise, the EU position on nonagricultural market access would remain without the necessary negotiating margin.

Bulgaria insists for exclusion of its most sensitive goods not only from the EU staging offer, but also from the final EGA list of products, as follows:

- bicycles and parts for bicycles, tariff lines 871190; 871200; 871491; 871492; 871493; 871494; 871495; 871499;
- copper foil 741011;
- aluminium reservoirs and products of aluminium, tariff lines 761100; 761520; 761699;
- chemicals, tariff lines 282300; 283329; 350790; 380891-380899; 382490;
- tubes and other products of polymers and plastics, tariff lines 391390; 391722; 391732; 391739; 391910; 392690;
- ball bearings, tariff line 848210;
- parts suitable for certain apparatus, tariff line 852990;
- needleloom felt and stitch, tariff line 560210;
- glass fibers and articles thereof, tariff lines 701939; 701990.

For reasons related to the defensive trade and economic interests of Bulgaria regarding the above mentioned products, we consider that it would not be sufficient to indicate the sensitivity, but these goods have to be excluded from the EU staging offer and the future negotiating rounds.

As already stated in our previous position, the bicycle industry is highly sensitive sector comprising mainly of SMEs not only in Bulgaria, but also in a number of other Member States. Union industry is a driving force for the related production of parts and accessories for bicycles, and also for some sectors of services. The industry within the EU creates directly and indirectly 60,000 to 70,000 jobs.

The eventual elimination of MFN duties for goods, subject to anti-dumping remedy, is not acceptable. Granting duty-free access to the EU market under the future EGA may violate significantly the precisely weighted level of protection against unfair commercial practices of third countries, may create additional injury to the producers, and distort the fair competition in the sector.

Without prejudice to the above position, Bulgaria reserves the right to make subsequent comments on the draft textual or tariff proposals (transitional periods, staging etc.) in the ongoing EGA negotiations.
