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OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

3534th Council meeting

Foreign Affairs

Trade

Brussels, 11 May 2017

President **Christian Cardona**
Minister for the Economy, Investment and Small
Business of Malta

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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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ITEMS DEBATED

New anti-dumping methodology

The Council took stock of work on a new methodology for assessing market distortions resulting from state intervention in third countries.

It endorsed a mandate approved by EU ambassadors on 3 May 2017 for negotiations with the European Parliament. It reaffirmed its commitment to tackling unfair trade practices that impact on EU industry.

The Council called on the Parliament to rapidly approve its own negotiating position, so that an agreement can be reached and the regulation applied well before the end of 2017.

The new anti-dumping methodology moves away from the distinction that was previously made between market and non-market economies. It puts in place a country-neutral system that applies equally to all members of the WTO.

Work on the proposal is running in parallel with a separate, broader revision of the EU's trade defence instruments, proposed in 2013.

The regulation requires a qualified majority for adoption by the Council, in agreement with the European Parliament. The presidency will begin 'trilogue' discussions with the Parliament as soon as the Parliament determines its own negotiating position.

[Commission proposal on the new anti-dumping methodology](#)

[European Council conclusions, 21 October 2016](#)

WTO ministerial conference in Buenos Aires

The Council discussed developments and prospects relating to the 11th WTO ministerial conference, to be held in Buenos Aires from 11 to 14 December 2017.

Ministers shared the Commission's sense of urgency as regards the need for ongoing discussions on possible outcomes of the conference to produce tangible results soon.

Since the last meeting in Nairobi in December 2015, the EU has been preparing its position for the next ministerial conference. It intends to play a leading role in achieving a successful and balanced outcome in Buenos Aires. The EU's objectives are to strengthen the WTO's central role in the multilateral trading system and to obtain substantive results.

Substantial progress has been achieved on fisheries subsidies, and discussions are ongoing in a number of other areas, including agriculture, services and digital trade.

[WTO webpage on the 11th ministerial conference](#)

Implementation of free trade agreements

The Council discussed the implementation of free trade agreements.

It agreed on the need to coordinate efforts by the Commission, member states and the business community to ensure effective implementation.

Ministers exchanged ideas on how to apply agreed provisions in a manner that would ensure that EU operators and EU citizens benefit to the fullest extent. They explored possible areas for improvement in terms of national practices, cooperation and EU coordinated actions.

A growing number of free trade agreements are being concluded at EU level. At present:

- 23 FTAs are being/have been implemented;
- 6 FTAs have been concluded but implementation has not started yet.

The nature of those agreements also varies widely. Whilst older agreements had a limited scope and level of ambition, a new generation of FTAs have evolved into deeper and more comprehensive partnerships, with commitments in a broad range of areas.

[Commission webpage on the EU's free trade agreements](#)

Other business

– EU-Ukraine trade relations

The Council took stock of work on a proposal for temporary trade measures for Ukraine.

The proposal is aimed at improving access to the EU market for industrial and agricultural products, in view of the difficult economic situation and economic reform efforts undertaken by Ukraine. It adds to trade provisions already introduced under an EU-Ukraine association agreement.

– Trade relations with Burma/Myanmar

The Council discussed progress in the negotiation of an investment protection agreement with Myanmar/Burma.

The agreement is aimed at offering investors from both sides a predictable and secure investment environment as part of a comprehensive strategy of engagement with Myanmar. The talks are nearing a conclusion.

– Trade relations with Australia, Chile and New Zealand

The Commission briefed the Council on developments regarding trade relations with Australia, Chile and New Zealand.

Discussions have been concluded with all three countries, aimed at determining the potential scope of free trade agreements. The Commission is expected to make proposals in June 2017 to enable negotiations to be launched later in the year.

– Reflection on globalisation

The Commission presented a reflection paper on globalisation, published as part of the follow-up to its March 2017 white paper on the future of Europe.

[Press release on Commission reflection paper on harnessing globalisation](#)

Lunch items

– *Trade relations with Japan, Mercosur and Mexico*

Ministers took stock of developments in the negotiation of free trade agreements with Japan, Mercosur and Mexico, and assessed the prospects for concluding the talks.

The talks with Japan have reached a decisive stage. On 21 March 2017, EU and Japanese leaders committed to advancing the negotiations, and a further round of talks was held in early April.

The talks with Mercosur, South America's largest economic bloc, are well-advanced. The most recent negotiating round took place in the week of 20 March 2017.

The negotiations with Mexico are picking up pace. On 1 February 2017, the EU and Mexico agreed to accelerate the talks on the modernisation of an existing free trade agreement. A negotiating round was held in early April.

[Commission webpage on trade with Japan](#)

[Commission webpage on trade with Mercosur](#)

[Commission webpage on trade with Mexico](#)

OTHER ITEMS APPROVED**TRADE****WTO trade policy review**

The Council adopted a decision setting out the position of the EU within the World Trade Organisation as regards the frequency of trade policy reviews of WTO members. The Council decided to support a one-year extension of each existing review cycle, putting their respective durations at three, five and seven years. ([7671/17](#))

Trade preferences for Sri Lanka

The Council agreed to grant additional trade preferences to Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka has ratified and implemented measures contained in a number of international conventions on human and labour rights, environmental protection and good governance. On this basis, Sri Lanka has become eligible to receive additional tariff preferences for sustainable development and good governance, in addition to the generalised scheme of tariff preferences benefiting all developing countries. ([5270/17](#))

Association agreement with Chile

The Council adopted a decision authorising the signature of a protocol to the existing association agreement with Chile. This protocol takes into account the accession of Croatia to the European Union on 1 July 2013.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

The Council adopted a decision to further support the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The decision updates EU support according to the review process conducted in 2016. The Council allocated a budget of €2.635 million for the year 2017 to projects supporting the implementation of the UNSC resolution.

UNSC resolution 1540 was adopted in April 2004 and was the first international instrument to jointly deal with weapons of mass destruction, their delivery and related materials. It introduced binding obligations which aimed to prevent non-state actors obtaining access to such weapons and related materials. Ever since, the EU has supported the implementation of UNSC resolution 1540 (2004) by conducting different projects consisting of sub-regional workshops, country visits, meetings, events, training and public relations efforts.

[Weapons of mass destruction \(EEAS website\)](#)

European Union Satellite Centre (SATCEN)

The Council approved the financial rules of the EU Satellite Centre (SATCEN). SATCEN supports EU decision-making and action in the context of the Common Foreign and Security Policy and provides decision-makers with early warning of potential crises. This enables them to take diplomatic, economic and humanitarian measures in good time, including generic planning for intervention.

SATCEN operates under the direction of the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the supervision of the Political and Security Committee. SATCEN's director reports to a governing board chaired by the EU's High Representative or her representative. The board comprises one representative of each EU member state and one Commission delegate.

[SATCEN webpage](#)

Relations with Tunisia

The Council approved the EU's position for the thirteenth meeting of the [EU-Tunisia Association Council](#) taking place in Brussels on 11 May 2017. The EU will continue to promote a broad political dialogue with Tunisia, placing the emphasis on the full range of issues of mutual interest such as **youth, democratic consolidation and promotion of good governance, inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development and growth, security and counter-terrorism, migration, mobility and human exchanges as well as financial cooperation.**

[EU-Tunisia Association Council on 11 May 2017](#)

[Report on the state of EU-Tunisia relations in 2015-2016](#)

Draft Declaration of the Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Urban Development

The Council adopted the EU's position for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Sustainable Urban Development taking place in Cairo on 22 May 2017. Urban areas have a central role to play in the transition to sustainable energy economies. The region and its cities will be impacted by climate change and global warming, and are faced with migration and refugee issues placing additional pressure on the urban areas. Therefore, it is important for the Union for the Mediterranean and its member states to define a shared vision for sustainable urban development and to adopt a comprehensive and operational agenda on this topic.

The Council highlights that the EU and its member states are committed to further **strengthening the capacity of local authorities** through capacity building programmes, **providing and facilitating the provision of technical assistance** and the transfer of technology for innovative and sustainable solutions, **strengthening access to finance** through the enhancement of blending mechanisms and the involvement of the private sector and **continuing to work to resolve conflicts** that have generated migration flows by encouraging constructive and inclusive dialogue through a comprehensive approach to migration.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

Schengen - internal border controls

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation to prolong temporary internal border controls in exceptional circumstances.

[Schengen area: Council recommends up to six month prolongation of internal border controls](#)

Schengen evaluation

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2016 evaluation of Malta on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of the Schengen Information System. ([9084/17](#))

Schengen evaluation

The Council adopted an implementing decision setting out a recommendation on addressing the deficiencies identified in the 2016 evaluation of Greece on the application of the Schengen acquis in the field of police cooperation. ([9086/17](#))

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AREA

47th meeting of the EEA Council

The Council established the EU's common position for the 47th meeting of the European Economic Area Council, due to take place in Brussels on 16 May 2017.
