



Council of the  
European Union

**Brussels, 21 November 2014  
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**WTO 307**

### **OUTCOME OF PROCEEDINGS**

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From: Council  
On: 21 November 2014  
Subject: Council Conclusions on Trade

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Delegations will find attached the Council Conclusions on Trade, as adopted by the Council on 21 November 2014

COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS ON TRADE

1. The Council met today for the first time with the new Commissioner for Trade, Cecilia Malmström, and in this context, the Council:
  - Recalls the conclusions of the European Council of February 2013
  - Recalls the conclusions of the European Council of June 2014
  - Recalls the Global Europe: Competing in the World strategy, and the Europe 2020 strategy "Trade, Growth and World Affairs";
  - Warmly welcomes the progress made since it last met on a range of important bilateral, plurilateral and legislative dossiers.
  
2. The Council reiterates the EU's determination to promote free, fair and open trade in a spirit of reciprocity and mutual benefit. The natural framework in which we will continue to reaffirm these principles is the WTO. The Council welcomes the breakthrough that should lead to full implementation of the Bali package, including the Trade Facilitation Agreement, and open the way for moving forward towards the conclusion of the DDA. Plurilateral and sectorial agreements can also contribute to the EU's growth agenda. While remaining committed to further strengthening the multilateral trading system, the EU will continue to focus on the development of its bilateral trade relations. These can and should be a positive contribution to the multilateral system. Building on the tangible progress made in the EU's bilateral trade agenda, efforts should be devoted to pursuing agreements with key partners, prioritising those negotiations that will provide the most benefit in terms of growth and jobs. Effective implementation of existing Agreements and rules enforcement are also key to promote growth and jobs.

3. Even though there are signs of economic recovery in Europe, unemployment remains a major concern, especially for young people. Therefore, the Union needs to take further steps to promote sustainable growth, increase investment, create more and better jobs: trade in goods, services and investment can make a significant contribution to achieve the aims at the core of the “Strategic Agenda for the Union in times of change”.
4. The trade agenda, which is also a tool of external relations, should therefore be fully coherent with other relevant EU policies, including through the right interaction between Commission departments. We encourage the Commission to continue improving all the "ex-ante" impact assessments that are produced for free trade negotiations, as well as producing “ex-post” impact evaluations for implemented agreements.
5. To let trade develop its untapped potential in the agricultural, industrial and services' sector, some structural problems have to be addressed: energy costs; access to raw materials (primarily through the removal of export duties and restrictions); internationalisation of SMEs; technical barriers and other non-tariff barriers. It is key to promoting favourable investment conditions and better market access. Respect for intellectual property rights (including geographical indications, patents, trademarks and copyright), open government procurement markets, as well as support of sustainable development (including the need to address challenges such as climate change and adherence to labour standards) must also remain in the centre of our trade negotiations. Finally, trade negotiations should additionally consider global value chains in light of their capacity to help promote growth, internationalise SMEs, increase investment and create more and better jobs in Europe.
6. The Council underlines the need to better communicate the advantages of trade. Transparency around trade negotiations should continue to be improved in order to enhance dialogue with European citizens, in a spirit of democratic accountability.

7. Therefore, the Council, taking into account the views expressed during today's meeting and recalling the above mentioned **European Council** Conclusions, invites the Commission to consider updating its strategic document on "Trade, Growth and World Affairs" presented in 2010 and to come back to the Council in an appropriate timeframe.
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