



TTIP round 11

Statement by EU chief negotiator Ignacio Garcia Bercero

Miami, 23 October 2015

This has been a round of very hard work. Both sides rolled up their sleeves and engaged in intensive negotiations. After this week we are one step closer towards agreeing a balanced, high standard and comprehensive trade agreement that will benefit consumers, small and large businesses and create new opportunities for workers on both sides of the Atlantic.

Of course, still a lot of work is ahead of us but an agreement can be reached if both sides are ready to fully engage in all areas of the negotiations, as we have done this week.

Concretely speaking, during this round we have made substantial progress on market access for EU and US companies. We have exchanged second tariff offers. Both sides are now on a comparable level in terms of tariff line coverage. This is an important step as our aim is to eliminate the vast majority of tariffs from day one of entry into force of the agreement. This will have immediate impact for companies trading across the Atlantic and also for consumers who will benefit from lower prices and more choice.

We have discussed thoroughly market access on public procurement. This will help us to prepare the ground for the exchange of initial offer in February next year. In the area of services, negotiators have continued their exchange of views on the revised offers that were presented in July. And we have also exchanged proposals for product-specific rules of origin for industrial products. These are key to determine which goods can benefit from the preferences of the agreement. In developing these rules our objective is also to achieve more simplicity for our importers and exporters.

In the regulatory and rules area, negotiators had been instructed by Commissioner Malmström and Ambassador Froman in September to give an additional boost to the talks.

We have a chance to create a strong partnership on regulatory cooperation to simplify the life of companies, in particular the small ones; and learn from each other in order to use scarce public resources as efficiently as possible and improve the protection for citizens. This partnership should be based on two key principles:

One. The cooperation is only possible if the level of protection for citizens stays the same or improves. This is not only true in TTIP, but for all our trade agreements, as confirmed in the new trade strategy announced by Commissioner Malmström last week.

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Two. Any form of regulatory cooperation will not change the way we regulate on public policies such as food safety or data privacy. Nor will it affect legislative processes or the independence of our regulators. What we want is to create bridges for regulators to work together in order to achieve better results.

Regulatory discussions on sectors were particularly constructive and intensive. We discussed how to achieve greater regulatory compatibility in nine sectors such as textiles, ITC, cars or machine engineering. We got closer to a determination of our key objectives in each sector, which is our next target: we expect to define with greater clarity our objectives, the main TTIP deliverables and how to achieve them over the next very few months.

Also, TTIP is an opportunity to develop a shared vision on how global trade rules should be modernized to catch up with today's reality.

Trade is not only about creating economic opportunities, but it is also about responsibility. That's why we have tabled our proposal on sustainable development, including labour and environment and we also discussed rules for trade facilitation, competition, energy and raw materials amongst others.

A shared and ambitious approach to global trade issues will help us shape rules for the 21st century.

I was also very pleased to meet with stakeholders and listen to their proposals. We heard from small and medium companies that they count on TTIP to simplify procedures and improve the information available to them so that they can fully benefit from the opportunities TTIP will create.

I also fully shared the views of many stakeholders, including trade unions' representatives, who argued about the special nature of public services. The EU treats public services in a special way and we protect them in all our trade agreement. TTIP will be no different. This commitment to the protection of public services is clearly reflected in the joint statement issued by Commissioner Malmström and Ambassador Froman in March this year.

To sum up, there is a strong political will on both sides of the Atlantic to reach a good agreement as confirmed during the latest discussions between Commissioner Malmström and Ambassador Froman in Washington in September.

This round was about translating this political will into concrete steps forward. This round achieved exactly that: progress and intensification of talks in many areas. I hope to keep up this pace to get a good deal for consumers, workers and companies in the EU.