



Conclusion of the 13th TTIP Negotiation Round  
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This round is a part of a very intense period of the negotiations. We have a clear objective: to make as much progress as possible to achieve a balanced, ambitious and high-standard trade agreement with the US.

**Translating new political momentum into practical solutions**

As you all know, earlier this week, President Obama's visit to Europe gave us a strong political boost.

We have been working this week on two complementary tracks, at political and technical level, to translate this political commitment into practical results.

On the political level Commissioner Malmström and Ambassador Froman met in Hanover at the beginning of the week. They agreed to continue these constructive talks in many meetings that will still take place before the summer break.

The objective of this round was to consolidate as many texts as we can – in other words, to agree on joint text in as many areas as possible. The round was a bridging round, between the huge amount of technical work we have already done, and the task we now face of creating joint texts and finding compromises where necessary, in particular in the regulatory and rules pillars. Let me highlight a few of the things that we achieved this week:

**Regulatory:** We have made significant progress in the chapters on both regulatory cooperation and good regulatory practices. With this in mind, we managed to consolidate the two texts on regulatory cooperation and good regulatory practices.

**SMEs:** We made substantial progress on the SME chapter – the first ever chapter of this kind we, the EU, are negotiating in a trade agreement. This aims to enable smaller firms in particular to make the most of the agreement.

**Customs and trade facilitation:** We also made good progress on the provisions of customs and trade facilitation. An ambitious chapter would simplify customs procedures and reduces fees and charges to the benefit of SMEs in particular.

**Tariffs:** We are also continuing to make progress on tariffs. During the round we had good talks on improving the existing offers, by for instance shortening the transition periods for

some of the products. Here consumers and companies would feel an immediate impact, as the prices of imported and exported products could fall. Indeed, EU firms pay over EUR 3.5 billion a year in customs tariffs when exporting to the US. We did not discuss the remaining 3% of tariff lines, which are the most sensitive.

We continue, of course, to work on all areas in TTIP. In some other chapters we are in the process of consolidating textual proposals. These include, for example, the chapters on sustainable development, which includes **labour and the environment**, and on **investment. Regulatory cooperation in sectors**: this was again very much in the centre of our discussions. A lot of technical work has been done, but quite substantial work is also still ahead of us. Before the negotiations started, nine sectors were identified for cooperation between regulators. On the EU side we presented our first proposal for one of these sectors, in this case for pharmaceuticals. In line with our transparency policy, we will publish this text on our website.

We also made some progress in discussions on **services**. The EU's objective is to pursue a high degree of ambition and gain substantial new market access for EU firms. We also had a good discussion on mutual recognition agreements for professional services and made significant progress in the consolidation of the text.

Finally, we had extensive discussions on **public procurement**. Here, we started to consolidate our respective texts. But for us, it is clear that we need to reach a similar level of progress in access to procurement markets as in tariffs and services in order to move the negotiations to the end game.

### **Perspective**

On the EU side we are ready to work hard to try to conclude these negotiations in 2016, but only if the substance of the deal is right. We are currently planning for another round before the summer break, most likely in July. The objective for this round would then be to continue the work of consolidation in all areas, so that we only have a very limited number of open issues (the so called 'square brackets') that will ultimately be resolved at political level. It needs to be the most ambitious, balanced and comprehensive agreement ever concluded by either us or the US.