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## **OUTCOME OF THE COUNCIL MEETING**

3463rd Council meeting

**Foreign Affairs**

**Trade issues**

Brussels, 13 May 2016

President

**Lilianne Ploumen**

Minister for Foreign Trade and Development  
Cooperation of the Netherlands

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<sup>1</sup> • 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>).  
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**ITEMS DEBATED**

**EU-Canada trade agreement**

The Council discussed a draft trade and investment agreement with Canada, the "comprehensive economic and trade agreement" (CETA).

It assessed the outcome of the negotiations, confirming its support for the agreement. The Commission confirmed its intention to submit a proposal to the Council in June 2016 for signature of CETA.

The Council emphasised a view shared amongst ministers that CETA is of mixed EU and member state competence and should be signed and concluded as such.

The aim is to sign the agreement at an EU-Canada summit planned for October 2016. Legal "scrubbing" has been completed and the text is now being translated into all EU official languages. It was made public on 29 February 2016.

CETA will remove more than 99% of tariffs that are currently imposed on trade between the EU and Canada. It includes provisions on market access for goods, services, investment and government procurement, as well as on intellectual property rights, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, sustainable development, regulatory cooperation, mutual recognition, trade facilitation, cooperation on raw materials, dispute settlement and technical barriers to trade.

During the legal scrubbing process, new provisions on investment protection and investment dispute settlement were included, comprising an investment court system. These reflect a new approach developed by the EU for investment dispute resolution.

The negotiations with Canada were conducted on the basis of a mandate agreed by the Council in April 2009. The talks on investment protection were started within the CETA framework following a Council decision in September 2011.

[Text of the EU-Canada comprehensive economic and trade agreement](#)

[Commission webpage on trade with Canada](#)

[2009 negotiating directives for an economic integration agreement with Canada](#)

[2011 modification negotiating directives for an economic integration agreement with Canada](#)

**WTO: follow-up to Nairobi conference**

The Council assessed developments following the 10<sup>th</sup> World Trade Organisation ministerial conference, held in Nairobi in December 2015.

It reviewed issues for which further work is needed under the WTO's Doha Development Agenda (DDA), as well as new issues to be taken up by the WTO.

The Commission presented its ideas for the post-Nairobi process, which will determine issues for discussion at the next ministerial conference, scheduled for late 2017. The EU's objectives are to strengthen the multilateral trading system and to reinvigorate and expand the WTO's negotiating agenda.

The DDA talks started at the WTO's fourth ministerial conference, held in Doha in 2001. They are aimed at facilitating global trade – by lowering trade barriers and strengthening trade rules – and improving trading opportunities for developing countries. Following a stalemate in the talks in 2011, ministers agreed to pursue efforts in areas where progress could be achieved.

The Nairobi conference concluded with agreement on a series of initiatives covering trade in agriculture and issues related to least-developed countries (LDCs).

[WTO webpage on the outcome of the 10th ministerial conference](#)

**EU-US trade and investment negotiations**

The Council discussed developments and next steps in negotiations on a trade and investment agreement with the United States, the "transatlantic trade and investment partnership" (TTIP).

It welcomed the Commission's efforts aimed at achieving an ambitious outcome in all key areas and which responds to EU interests. Ministers reiterated their wish for the agreement to be finalised during the term of office of the current US administration, provided that the substance is right. The coming months will therefore be crucial for success. They emphasised the need to strengthen public support for TTIP.

The Council acknowledged that important progress had been made in recent months, whilst much work remains before political negotiations can begin in earnest. It will continue to follow developments closely.

The most recent TTIP negotiating round was held in New York in the week of 25 April 2016, covering all main parts of the agreement. Another round will be held before the 2016 summer recess, most likely in July. Consolidated texts are being prepared for all chapters of the agreement, so as to leave a limited number of issues to be resolved in the "endgame" at political level.

The negotiators are preparing an agreement grouped into three parts:

- Market access, including for trade in goods and customs duties, services, public procurement and rules of origin;
- Regulatory cooperation. A "horizontal" chapter will cover regulatory cooperation, technical barriers to trade and food safety and animal and plant health. A chapter on specific industries will include chemicals, cosmetics, engineering products, information and communication technologies, medical devices, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, textiles and vehicles;
- Rules, covering sustainable development, energy and raw materials, customs and trade facilitation, SMEs, investment protection and investor-state dispute settlement, state-state dispute settlement, competition policy and intellectual property and geographical indications.

The Commission is leading the negotiations on behalf of the EU and its member states, on the basis of a mandate agreed by the Council in June 2013. The Council decided in October 2014 to make public its negotiating directives for the TTIP negotiations.

[April 2016 report on the state of play with TTIP](#)

[Commission statement at the conclusion of the 13th TTIP negotiation round](#)

[Commission webpage on trade with the US](#)

[EU negotiating mandate for TTIP](#)