

CECILIA MALMSTRÖM
MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 29 JAN. 2015

Subject: Publication of the TiSA mandate

Dear Minister Rinkēvičs,

Responding to the public concerns on the transparency of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), Ministers last year agreed to publish the TTIP negotiating directives ("mandate"). The publication, in the context of a wider TTIP transparency initiative, has been well received by those following these important negotiations.

Following this initiative, the Commission has also taken important steps to enhance the transparency of the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) negotiations, including by publishing on its website the EU offer and other documents. TiSA has attracted considerable attention from the public, notably on issues which are also of particular interest to civil society in the TTIP negotiations, such as the treatment of public services. For reasons of transparency, we feel it will be very important to take the further step of publishing the TiSA mandate. This step would underline the Council's contribution to the transparency efforts currently made around trade negotiations, and respond to requests from the European Parliament. In addition, the US is among the TiSA participants, and releasing the TiSA mandate could therefore contribute positively also to the TTIP transparency debate.

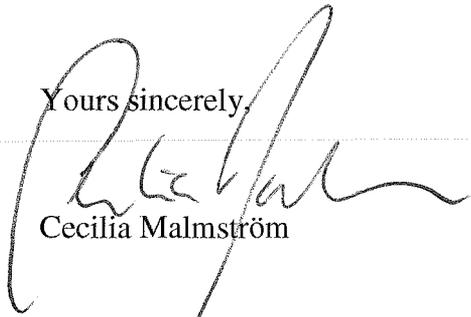
Moreover, the specific nature of TiSA - a multi-country negotiation, which the EU joined given its open character and objective of its future multilateralisation - is a further reason in favour of publication. It would correspond to the World Trade Organization's framework for transparency and confirm the EU's position aiming at integrating this agreement into the WTO multilateral system.

Finally, as negotiator on behalf of the EU, I would like to confirm that the publication of the mandate would not undermine our negotiating position in these specific negotiations nor harm the public interest of the Union as regards our international relations. On the contrary I believe that this would be important to strengthen the legitimacy of the negotiations.

I would therefore ask you to bring this issue to the Council with a view to taking the necessary steps to ensure the rapid publication of the mandate.

I am copying this letter to our fellow Ministers.

Yours sincerely,



Cecilia Malmström

Cc: Trade Ministers of EU Member States