

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Brussels, 7.6.2013
C(2013) 3419 final

Dear Presidents,

The Commission would like to thank the Houses of the Oireachtas for their Opinion on the Commission proposal for a regulation establishing a common organisation of the markets in agricultural products {COM(2011) 626 final}, in particular concerning the scheduled abolition of sugar quotas post 2015.

The Commission welcomes the support of the Houses of the Oireachtas for the ending of the quota by 30 September 2015.

Article 204(3) of Regulation (EC) 1234/2007 establishes that the sugar quota shall apply until the marketing year 2014/15. This end date was part of a Council decision to reform the sugar sector in 2005. The sector was reformed between 2006 and 2009 to become more competitive before the imports of sugar produced in developing countries were liberalised in 2009.

After a consolidation phase between 2009 and 2015, the abolition of the sugar quota regime is due to take place by 1/10/2015 to complete the reform process.

In its Opinion, the Houses of the Oireachtas suggest allocating to all Member States wishing to do so a quota equivalent to what they relinquished, should the quota be extended until 2019/2020.

The Commission does not consider that it would be appropriate to increase quotas for particular Member States as this would entail a return to the situation before the 2006 reform, which was not the intention of the Council at the time of that reform.

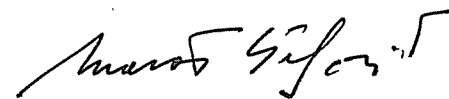
Once both legislators have adopted their position, the Commission will facilitate to the extent possible an agreement on the whole CAP reform package, including the sugar market measures.

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The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the issues raised by the Houses of the Oireachtas and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Maroš Šefčovič', with a stylized flourish at the end.

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*