



*Brussels, 3.11.2016
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Dear Chair,

The Commission would like to thank the Seimas for its opinion supporting the continuation of negotiations on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) with the United States of America.

The conclusion of an ambitious, balanced and comprehensive trade agreement with the United States remains a priority of this Commission. The market access part of the Agreement should, as your Opinion points out, not only pursue an ambitious level of tariff liberalisation, but also significantly expand EU companies' access to United States' government procurement contracts.

TTIP will also need to provide for solid chapters on regulatory coherence and rules, notably in the field of trade and sustainable development, investment protection and energy and raw materials. On energy, we fully share your assessment as regards the importance of having solid rules on free trade, transit and distribution. We also agree with you on the importance of developing important regulatory principles and cooperation mechanisms in TTIP, while fully respecting domestic procedures and preserving standards, notably in the areas of safety, human health, animal health, data protection and social and environmental standards.

We continued negotiations during the 15th Round in New York in early October. Our teams have worked extremely hard and have made significant progress in a number of areas. Quite a substantial part of the discussion has been dedicated to regulatory issues, including regulatory coherence, technical barriers to trade, plants and animals health (SPS) and the nine specific sectors identified for cooperation (cars, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, cosmetics, ICT, pesticide, engineering, medical devices and textiles). Progress in some of those sectors is very encouraging. For instance, we have been exploring updating the existing mutual recognition agreement on good manufacturing practices in the pharmaceutical sector.

*Mr Benediktas JUODKA
Chair of the Committee
on Foreign Affairs of the Seimas
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*cc. Ms Loreta GRAUŽINIENĖ
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Now, each side will report back on the progress achieved. On the EU's side, our trade ministers will meet again on 11 November. In the meantime, on 21 October the European Council held a discussion on trade issues, including on the state of play of the negotiations with the United States.

The Commission would like to express its appreciation for Lithuania's continued support for the TTIP negotiations and looks forward to continuing the political dialogue with the Seimas in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Frans Timmermans
First Vice-President*

*Cecilia Malmström
Member of the Commission*