

Meeting between HoC Maria Åsenius and BDI - 21 March 2017

Participants:

- BDI : Dr Stefan Mair (Member of the Executive Board), [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], [REDACTED], BDI Brussels Representation), [REDACTED] ([REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], BDI Brussels Representation)
- COM: Maria Åsenius (HoC), Pedro Velasco Martins (CAB), [REDACTED] (G3)

BDI requested a meeting with HoC Maria Åsenius, which took place on 21 March 2017. The discussions covered several key topics, such as EU-US relations, the EU-Japan FTA, the EU-MERCOSUR FTA, data flows, investment screening and the legislation on dual use.

1. EU-US relations

- BDI expressed concerns about the failure to include an anti-protectionist message in the statement of G20 finance ministers.
- BDI explained that they are in close contact with their US counterpart, the US Chamber, which is also concerned.
- BDI informed that its member companies are emphasising their contribution to the US economy. 3 CEOs (BMW, Siemens and Schaeffler) accompanied Chancellor Merkel to the US to engage on a high level. BDI also recently issued a new brochure called "German Business Matters", showing contributions to the US economy on a state level as well.
- HoC Åsenius explained the state of play in EU-US relations from the COM perspective.

2. EU-Japan FTA negotiations

- BDI inquired about the state of play of the EU-Japan FTA negotiations. BDI also expressed concerns about the recent media coverage (Tageszeitung) about the transparency of the negotiations. BDI committed to reach out to its civil society partners to discuss the FTA.
- HoC Åsenius informed BDI about the state of play of the negotiations and highlighted COM's commitment to transparency (e.g. reports of the rounds with Japan have been published.)

3. EU-MERCOSUR FTA negotiations

- BDI informed of its recent statement (issued on 20 March 2017) in support of the negotiations, encouraging the political conclusion of the FTA by the end of 2017.
- HoC Åsenius explained the state of play from the COM perspective.

4. Data flows

- BDI mentioned that it has a common position on data flows but internal reflections are still ongoing about how to engage with the German government it, taking into account that the position of Germany seems defensive.
- BDI committed to highlight the importance of data flows to the German government, while not compromising data privacy rules.

- HoC Åsenius responded that the COM position is still being formulated.

5. **Investment screening**

- BDI expressed serious concerns about the ongoing discussions and initiatives on a potential investment screening mechanism in the EU.
- BDI already has a position on this issue, which it recently explained in a hearing in the Bundestag. While this position is two years old and it needs to be reconfirmed, BDI was confident that their position against such a mechanism will be upheld.
- BDI plans to discuss the issue with MEP Caspary (DE, EPP) as well.

6. **Legislation on dual use**

- BDI expressed concerns about the 'catch-all' principle in the discussions about the dual use legislation.
- BDI explained that legal certainty and effective implementation would be crucial for its member companies and in this regard, product and country-specific lists should be provided.
- BDI is currently finalising its position paper on this matter.