

ESF Policy Committee, 17 October 2013.

Resume:

The main purpose of the ESF Policy Committee meeting was to go through the state-of- play of on-going trade in services negotiations. The discussion underlined a keen interest of ESF members to exchange views on the negotiations:

- On TISA, ESF members encouraged an ambitious approach reflecting the level of commitments/FTAs most participants already had. Underlining the importance of extending disciplines in various sectors (eg telecom, finance) but also a risk for lock-in of asymmetry if not backed by further market access improvements (eg postal).

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Details:

- The Policy Committee meeting was chaired by Mr Tilmann Kupfer from BT, and broad ESF participation from committee members. Sir Thomas Harris, Chairman of the European Services Forum also attended. [Art. 4.1 b] (HoU Services) and [Art. 4.1 b] participated from DG Trade. The main purpose of the meeting was to go through the state of play of ongoing trade in services negotiations.

TISA:

- COM informed the committee of the recent round of negotiations hosted by the EU. The purpose of stabilizing the main text had largely been achieved, and TISA participants were now aiming at presenting offers during a set period in November. In several sectors, such as telecommunications, maritime, transport, Mode 4 etc. work continued on consolidating text on the basis of proposals sponsored by participants. COM underlined the priority of extending results to more countries. The expected entry of China and Uruguay prompted a need for considerations on how to extend membership of TISA, while keeping ambition.
- ESF members encouraged an ambitious approach reflecting the level of commitments/FTA most participants already had. Underlining the importance of extending disciplines in in various sectors (e.g .telecom, finance) but also a risk for lock-in of exiting asymmetry if not backed up by further market access improvements (eg. postal services). On extending

membership ESF members stressed the notions of keeping the entry barrier sufficiently high. Some also questions the intention underpinning Chinas wish to enter the talks.

- COM thanked ESF for their contributions to the consultations this summer, and noted that it was important to know ESF members priorities, and invited members to provide further input, as appropriate.

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