

CC(17)2155:1 – [REDACTED]

Ms Cecilia Malström
Commissioner for Trade
European Commission
200, rue de la Loi
BE-1049 Bruxelles

Brussels, 10th March 2017

Re: Trade negotiations with Mercosur

Dear Commissioner,

Copa and Cogeca are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU. Copa represents over 23 million farmers and their family members, whilst Cogeca represents the interests of 22,000 agricultural cooperatives. The European agricultural sector is committed to supporting your aim of reviving economic growth and creating jobs for the European economy. Today, the European agricultural and agri-food sector employs over 43 million people and registers a positive trade balance of 20 billion euros in 2016.

We would like to express our deep concerns about the uncertainty on the results of the EU-Japan negotiations. This trade negotiation is the only one foreseen in which European agriculture can improve its positive net trade balance. For this reason, we cannot accept to lower our ambitions to reach a deal with Japan.

At the same time, a new round of negotiations has been scheduled on EU-Mercosur by 20th of March in which Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary chapter would be addressed. Copa and Cogeca consider that the resolution of the list of 28 pending dossiers on sanitary or phyto-sanitary certificates is not sufficient to unlock the trade negotiations toward a political level.

We would like to remind you that European Farmers cannot accept an SPS chapter which would allow practices forbidden on the EU territory for safety reason. You have stated in the Civil dialogue group meeting in April 2016 and also during the trade council meeting in May 2016 that the EU safety rules and animal welfare standards are not negotiable. The implementation of the current OIE standard for animal identification represent a traceability of less than 10% of the day of the animal. These practices would not been allowed in EU. Therefore the EU negotiator should look for a full traceability for individual bovine animal.

For the poultry sector, we would like to remind you that processed animal proteins as feeding stuff is allowed in Mercosur countries and the stoning system broadly used in Mercosur countries is not allowed in EU.

Animal welfare regulation is also representing huge gap between EU and Mercosur farmers. EU is applying strict rules on the animal welfare which are imposed to European farmers with a risk of not having access to the market and judicial case. The cost of these measures may represent between 3 to 5 euros per 100 kg, bearing in mind the margin in this sector is in the range of 0 to 60 euros per 100 kg. Therefore a structured dialogue on animal welfare will not be enough to ensure a level playing field.

Without these consideration, Copa and Cogeca would oppose to any progress on the other chapters of the negotiation. We would like to remind you the last study carried out by the European Joint Research Centre illustrates that the European agricultural sector would inevitably face significant losses, exceeding €7 billion. The more recent study managed by DG agriculture has confirmed the drastic shock that represent a trade deal without fair rules between EU and Mercosur for several EU sectors, such as beef, poultry, fruit.

Please be aware that a copy of this letter has also been sent to the Commissioner for Agriculture, Phil Hogan and Commissioner for Health, Mr Vytenis Andriukaitis.

Yours faithfully,



Pekka Pesonen
Secretary General

Cc: Phil Hogan, Vytenis Andriukaitis