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EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Cabinet of Executive Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis

Brussels, 03/02/2021

Call between CAB TRADE and Nokia

03-02-2021

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MINUTES

Participants:

Nokia:

Trade: Maija Celmina (CAB), Elina Melngaile (CAB), (B1); (R2), (F4)

Minutes of the meeting:

Nokia introduced the main focus of operation of the company, including telecom infrastructure and services, licensing and in particular 5G. EU is lagging behind in the 5G rollout. Half of MS are yet to launch 5G tenders as the allocation of spectrum to operators has been delayed by the pandemic. Operators and vendors need to work together to ensure cybersecurity. Nokia invests 20% of its revenue in R&D and is involved in technology leadership. Provides advice on digital sector to EU and supports the objective of open strategic autonomy. The trade policy position paper released in November provides overview on Nokia’s thinking.

Connectivity is critical to the EU economy and technological sovereignty. Nokia follows on how this evolves overtime. Public intervention may be required to ensure that supplies are available. Nokia submitted comments on the white paper on distortive foreign subsidies, it could be improved but it is a step in the right direction. It considers that companies that receive funds from other sources should not be eligible to receive EU funds. On public procurement, Nokia supports IPI and considers that EU public procurement should prioritize companies that contribute to open strategic autonomy and respect EU values. Nokia considers the OECD framework for export credits does not work, as competitors routinely obtain more competitive funding, and would like to see an EU approach on export credits integrated in the
EU trade strategy. Nokia supports EU-US collaboration including on export controls, emerging technologies and exports via cloud. Nokia however prefers to refrain from commenting on enforcement actions. Finally on the 5G rollout in China, Nokia confirmed that operators will go for open tenders so Nokia will be able to bid and therefore is investing in adjusting to local specifications.

TRADE informed that the new trade policy strategy will be released in the coming weeks and already includes elements on digital trade and the Trade and Technology Council. Appreciated Nokia’s submissions on the foreign subsidies and procurement consultation exercises. The new trade strategy will contain a reference to export credits, but the work is at an early stage. TRADE is currently reflecting and coordinating with the relevant actors and invites Nokia to provide data showing the loss of market shares to help us better understand where our priorities are. In respect of EIB funding, COM is making use of negative opinions to ensure lending operations both in the EU and in third country markets do not favour subsidized vendors or create dependencies. We are looking at better structural solutions to conduct these assessments.

In respect of the Trade and Technology Council with the US, EU is looking at a closed forum to discuss standards, measures and policies related to technology where we try to agree on common approaches on export controls, FDI screening or on how to handle countries that do not share our values. It should also look at cybersecurity and provide a venue for information sharing. In coordination with DG CNECT and others we are still assessing the areas to cover. We expect to send a proposal to the Us by end of February.