



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Trade

Directorate E - Neighbouring countries, USA and Canada
USA and Canada

Brussels,
USA and Canada

Meeting Report

IGB visit to Berlin - TTIP meetings 11 June - important points to note

Dear all,

See below report of Ignacio's meetings on TTIP in Berlin on 11 June:

Summary:

Very timely visit just after the G7 Elmau communiqué and the cancelled vote on TTIP in the European Parliament, both having largely dominated German media headlines this week. Constructive meetings with yet another set of important stakeholders (mostly the respective top level) in the German TTIP debate (further to meetings in the past weeks of the Commissioner and of Ignacio): automotive industry "VDA" (Mr Wissmann), Trade union Confederation "DGB" (Mr Hoffmann), Federation of Consumer Organisations (Mr Müller), Federal Foreign Office (Directors-General for Economic and EU Affairs) and a couple of Social-Democratic MPs in the German Bundestag. Beyond the predictable stances some counterparts came up with new suggestions on how to present TTIP from a more positive, embracing angle. Overall recognition that things on ISDS "move into the right direction".

Most interesting points:

Confederation of Trade unions DGB decided at its last board meeting to join an alliance of around 20 environmental and anti-globalisation organisations for a major "Anti-TTIP-demonstration" on 10 October in Berlin. President Hoffmann explained that 3 of the 8 sectoral trade unions pushed for this and the DGB board decided to stay united [-----
-----**Art. 4.3**-----]. Background that sectoral unions ver.di (services) and IG Metall (industry) have annual conferences in September/October.

[-----**Art. 4.3**-----
-----], albeit the title reads "Stop TTIP and CETA !- for a fair global trade !" [-----
-----**Art. 4.3**-----
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Interlocutors reported on US presidential candidate Jeb Bush touring Berlin with clear pro-TTIP stance and expressing hope that majority will be reached in both houses with only few left wing Democrats being fundamentally opposed.

At political level great interest in timing and calendar, with German federal elections looming in 2017 when TTIP might be up for (national) ratifications.

1) DGB (Messrs Hoffmann, [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b]): Strongest interest/red lines still on ISDS, ILO labour standards and services of public interest. Recognition that ISDS "moves into the right direction"; mistrust and growing concern (pressure from IG Metall) that future investments of DE companies will go to US to "circumvent EU workers' rights" through "right to work"-legislation in 25 US States, e.g. Volkswagen "Chattanooga case", T-mobile, Siemens with already ten thousands of their employees in US, DGB is in close contact with US trade unions on this; on public services (pressure from services union ver.di and teachers' union GEW) a clearer definition should be found, positive list is favoured. A more positive narrative for TTIP should be found, perception that global regulatory issues are not discussed yet in negotiations, idem growing global inequality as researched lately by OECD.

2) Consumer Organisations vzbv (Müller, [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b]): want TTIP to be success, hence decided not to join anti-TTIP alliance, however general concern "that trade concerns may override the views of regulators in critical sectors", i.e. food safety, cosmetics and chemicals and that regulatory cooperation body will enhance pressure that legislation will move de facto from national to EU level, with national voices having no more influence (point also raised by some SPD MPs); ISDS: same degree of protection for EU investors should be achieved as for US investors. Otherwise international trade court favoured, but concern that investment protection standards in CETA are stricter than under German law, follow-up with Brussels office soon to be arranged with TRADE legal experts.

3) Some (due to plenary session in parallel) SPD Bundestag MPs ([Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], only [Art. 4.1b] being explicitly critical on regulatory co-operation) and staffers: few new positions, but rather more questions directed at IGB on timing/calendar, "Buy American", TPP, NSA/surveillance/data protection, possible review clause; on ISDS concern that term "justified claims" in cases of alleged indirect expropriation is equally unclear as "fair and equitable treatment" in existing BITs; suggestion to do more Commission media work and publicity on "inter-mediate achievements".

4) Automotive industry VDA (Wissmann, [Art. 4.1b]): on ISDS favours COM concept paper over Gabriel proposal, commitment towards international trade court seems unwise, hardly any Minister/politician in Germany understands ISDS, hence no clear pro-ISDS statements; on car sector: tariffs only deal would be disappointing, equivalence study of car industry is imminent and should shed more light on this.

5) Courtesy visit at Federal Foreign Office showing great interest with three departments, economic affairs, EU affairs and US desk present ([Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b], [Art. 4.1b]): glad that Commission was pleased with Chancellor Merkel's clear pro stance at G7 summit, promise to give all necessary support to persuade US on the need for them to move on their "sensitive issues", agree that CETA should not be compromised with too hasty efforts on ISDS in TTIP.

Best wishes from Berlin,

[Art. 4.1b]

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