

Subject:

Attachments:

Meeting with European Branded Clothing Alliance (EBCA)

12 November 2014, 17:00 – 18:00

BERL Cabinet Meeting Room

Industry:

(Inditex)

(Ralph Lauren)

(Ralph Lauren)

(Levi Strauss & Co.)

(EBCA)

Maria ÅSENIUS

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EBCA is a coalition of major retail clothing brands comprising H&M, Inditex, Levi Strauss, Nike, Ralph Lauren, Cortefiel and VF Corporation. In total, EBCA represents over 60 brands and 150,000 European jobs covering design, marketing and R&D, as well as manufacturing, retail and distribution.

Maria ÅSENIUS explained the status of TTIP negotiations and invited EBCA to speak up. [REDACTED] mentioned that they work with SMEs in Europe. [REDACTED] underlined Levi Strauss' engagement with social and human rights to improve the supply chain. They cooperate with competitors to improve working conditions in order to increase productivity. She mentioned the HER project to empower working women. Levi Strauss follows ILO standards.

asked if the present companies would have plans to repatriate some of their production to Europe. answered that they already have business in Italy and are planning to expand it. This approach would be supported by an FTA between EU and US, as they need lower tariffs, duty free fabrics and leathers and regional coherence.

explained that H&M manufactures high end products in Portugal and Italy and produces also for other brands. EBCA handed out the common position paper on TTIP by AAfA, EBCA and USFIA. The industry mentioned as barriers to trade between the US and Europe: multiple testing obligations, labelling and rules of origin being different for each FTA. Testing involved chemicals, azo dyes, formaldehyde, lead, colour fastness, inflammability, etc.

Maria ÅSENIUS underlined the huge communication effort to be done on TTIP in cooperation with the industry, Member States and the European Parliament. Concrete examples were needed. EBCA promised to put together some material.

stressed the importance of single transformation in Vietnam. EBCA raised market access problems in Turkey, in particular as regards additional customs duties on footwear.

EBCA commented on their meeting with DEVCO concerning the Garment Flagship Initiative. They underlined the need to work more with stakeholders and regional and national administrations and focus less on consumer interest. added that globally acting companies would be best in CSR and would be against additional burdens.

asked not to reinvent the wheel and to build on existing projects.

raised the ban on synthetic materials by the Russian Federation. Maria ÅSENIUS referred to the wider political context. EBCA presented their EU Trade Policy Manifesto. referred to a study made by Copenhagen Economics on the advantages of global supply chains (**COPENHAGEN ECONOMICS**, *Unchaining the Supply Chain – How global branded clothing firms are contributing to the European economy*, report commissioned by EBCA, April 2013).



European Commission

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