



EUROPEAN UNION  
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The Head of Delegation

Washington, 6 December 2011

## **E-NOTE DELUSW**

**Subject: EU Trade Counsellors Meeting with Chris Wilson, AUSTR for WTO**

### **Summary:**

Chris Wilson, Assistant USTR for World Trade Organisation and Multilateral Affairs, highlighted the main actions for the WTO 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference and gave an overview of America's stance regarding the Doha Round Negotiations.

### **Detail:**

Chris Wilson, Assistant USTR for World Trade Organisation and Multilateral Affairs first gave a brief overview of US positioning for the WTO Ministerial. Chris acknowledged that things were finally falling into place for the statement. He added that it is now understood that there will be no ministerial declaration but a statement by the Chair of the conference. He welcomed the preparatory work that had been undertaken by the Chairman of the General Council Amb. Agah to identify and summarise elements of convergence and divergence between WTO Members.

Wilson highlighted the main areas for the WTO 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference, noting that this has been an intensive process, as being:

- (1) Trade and Development
- (2) Importance of the Multilateral Trading System
- (3) Doha Round Negotiations

On Trade and Development, Wilson noted that although not everyone got everything they wanted, they were important elements in the summary, notably: cotton, monitoring mechanism for special and differential treatment, work programme for the accession of LDCs, the extension of the TRIPS transition period and the LDCs services waiver.

Regarding the importance of the Multilateral Trading System, Wilson commented that the U.S. had insisted on including language on resisting protectionism and on the importance of rules. With regards to Doha Round Negotiations, the general feeling is that an honest credible statement is needed that Doha Negotiations are not working and a new strategy is needed. "Business as usual is not going to work and it is time to turn the page. We need to look at new, credible and fresh approaches to Doha and on elements currently outside of Doha scope. Next year should be dedicated to discussions on how we will turn

the page. It is important to acknowledge the difficulties in the negotiations for the sake of health of the institution. During the Ministerial, Kirk will not be delivering any specific points, but the U.S. has considerable amount of interest in the area of services liberalization ("plurilaterals are permitted under GATS") and trade facilitation (US will be participating in trade facilitation work group). The plan is to remain "low-key" and "non-specific".

Wilson reiterated the US position that the US is not favoring EU's route of a detailed roadmap. "This definitely doesn't seem something that America is in favor in doing". He called the divergence between the EU and the US of "tactical" nature. The U.S. thought that such an approach was simply not realistic at this stage in such a short timeframe given the enormous divergences among the countries. "We are not interested in using the MC8 to declare Doha dead, we just want to step back and take a reflective look at the Doha agenda; where it is working well and where it isn't". He added that there is a clear recognition by WTO members that the Single Undertaking is not achievable as expected. He also mentioned that there is a clear recognition that if some elements can be concluded earlier, there should be no inhibition to do so.

Other discussions points included Russia's WTO Accession On Jackson Vanik amendment, Wilson indicated that while it was clear that the U.S. would have to invoke non-application at this moment, he hoped the U.S. would resolve the hurdle and pass the legislation before Russia completes its domestic ratification process so that there is no practical impact (of invoking non-application).

On Services, Wilson said that the U.S. would like to engage within the friends of services group to see what can be done (to explore red lines, AV, maritime) but to also encourage countries to express their own innovative ideas. He thought that it was important that members of the WTO feel comfortable bringing ideas to table to relevant committees, and not be overburdened with processes directly in place; it seems that some restructuring may be needed on existing procedures in place. On the American side, there is definitely interest on the ITA expansion and ways of structuring it, but it is important to do some preliminary work before raising its profile.

Regarding the GPA, he expressed his hope that the deal could be concluded next week (especially so that both sides can focus on China and other potential GPA members). Responding to a question on whether the U.S. would be adding any additional entities, Chris said that it was not the case at this juncture, noting however that the U.S. may be willing to do more on a bilateral basis. He then clarified that at sub-federal level, the decision to join the GPA is strictly up to the Governor of that particular state. Lastly, Wilson noted that the emphasis should be put on creating leverage vis-a-vis emerging economies such as China, India and Brazil. He pointed to TPP and Transatlantic working group recommendations as a couple of ways to achieve such leverage.