

Ms Cecilia Malmström
Commissioner for Trade
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 - Brussels
BELGIUM

Brussels, 12 April 2018

Subject : ESF Call for swift signature and ratification of concluded FTAs

Dear Commissioner Malmström,

The European Services Forum has been heavily involved in providing input for the trade negotiations that the European Commission has lead and we have welcomed the conclusion of the talks with Singapore in October 2014, Vietnam in February 2016 and Japan in December 2017. Services companies are wondering when the implementation of these agreements will begin. In a world that is evolving ever faster with the digitalisation of the economy, members are asking why it is taking so long after the conclusion of the difficult part of the negotiations, to move to the implementation phase.

Consequently, we are calling on you and your colleagues at the European Union institutions who are directly involved in trade policy, to swiftly sign and ratify the trade agreements that have already been concluded, notably the deals with Singapore, Vietnam and Japan, in order for businesses to start enjoying the benefits of the positive negotiated agreements. This is particularly important as these three countries have now concluded the Comprehensive and Progressive Trans Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), and we strongly believe that the EU should be a first mover.

ESF believes the EU cannot afford another process as lengthy as the one that followed the conclusion and signature of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement.

In accordance with the Opinion 2/15 of the European Court of Justice, which clarified the scope of the respective competences in the field of European trade policy, we therefore urge you to submit the trade parts of these agreements as being full EU competence, to the European Council and the European Parliament, for signature and ratification as soon as possible. This could facilitate their entry into force before this Parliament legislature recess. The Investment chapters, when relevant, - that have been clearly identified by the Court as being covered by a mixed competence between the European Union and the EU Member States and hence requiring a legitimate longer period for ratification - should be submitted in separate packages.

We therefore urge the college of Commissioners to submit these three agreements to the Council at its meeting of 17th April 2018. We remain at your disposal for any further information on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Art. 4.1(b)

ESF Chairman

Cc: *Members of the European Commission & Mr. Jean-Luc Demarty, Director General, DG Trade*

List of ESF Members supporting the above Position Paper

1. Accountancy Europe
2. Architects' Council of Europe –ACE
3. British Telecom Plc
4. BDO
5. Bureau International des Producteurs et Intermédiaires d'Assurances – BIPAR
6. BUSINESSEUROPE
7. BUSINESSEUROPE WTO Working Group
8. Conseil des barreaux de la Communauté Européenne – CCBE
9. Danish Shipping
10. Deutsche Telekom AG
11. Deutsche Post DHL
12. DI – Confederation of Danish Industries
13. Digital Europe
14. EK - Confederation of Finnish Industries
15. Ernst & Young
16. EuroCommerce
17. European Banking Federation – FBE
18. European Community Shipowners' Associations – ECSA
19. European Express Association – EEA
20. European Federation of Engineering and Consultancy Associations – EFCA
21. European Public Telecom Network – ETNO
22. European Satellite Operators Association - ESOA
23. European Savings Banks Group – ESBG
24. European University Association - EUA
25. Fédération de l'Industrie Européenne de la Construction – FIEC
26. Foreign Trade Association – FTA
27. HSBC Group
28. IBM Europe, Middle East & Africa
29. Inmarsat
30. Insurance Europe
31. Irish Business and Employers' Confederation - IBEC
32. Law Society of England & Wales
33. Le Groupe La Poste
34. Microsoft Corporation Europe
35. Oracle Europe, Middle East & Africa
36. PostEurop
37. Prudential Plc.
38. SELDIA – European Direct Selling Association
39. Svenskt Näringsliv (Confederation of Swedish Enterprise)
40. Telenor Group
41. The CityUK
42. Thomson-Reuters
43. UPS
44. Zurich Financial Services