

Brussels, **20 JUIN 2018**

Dear Chairman,

With this letter we wish to draw your attention to the adoption by the College on 11 June of proposals for Council Decisions for signature and conclusion of an Agreement in the form of an exchange of letters amending Protocols of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Morocco<sup>1</sup> (hereafter “Association Agreement”).

The draft Agreement amends Protocols No 1 and 4 of the Association Agreement in order to comply with the requirements of the judgement of the Court of Justice of the European Union of 21 December 2016 (case C-104-16 P Council v Front Polisario) and creates the legal basis for granting tariff preferences to products from Western Sahara.

The proposals are accompanied by a report from the Commission services and the European External Action Service. This report describes the benefits of the agreement for the Western Saharan population and economy, as well as the outcome of the consultations held with a broad range of Western Saharan local representatives, civil society and other organisations and bodies, including the Polisario Front. On balance, even if some of those who have been consulted contest the proposed Agreement for political rather than socio-economic reasons, the consultation showed a broad support for the benefits arising from extending the proposed tariff preference.

We would also like to highlight that the draft Agreement is without prejudice to the EU position on the status of Western Sahara, and that it reaffirms the EU support for the UN process aimed at reaching a definitive political solution with respect to Western Sahara.

This Agreement is also very important to develop and strengthen relations with Morocco, a key partner in the EU's Southern Neighbourhood with whom the EU has developed a broad and deep partnership of mutual interest in the economic, political, social and migration spheres.

---

<sup>1</sup> Euro-Mediterranean Agreement establishing an association between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Morocco, of the other part (OJ L 70 of 18.3.2000, p. 2).

*MEP David McAllister  
Chairman of AFET Committee  
European Parliament  
Bât. Altiero Spinelli  
14E140  
60, rue Wiertz  
B-1047 Brussels*

The Commission has refrained from proposing the provisional application of the Agreement upon its signature, in the expectation that the Agreement can be concluded speedily for the economic benefit of the Western Saharan population and to guarantee legal security and stability as well as trade certainty.

You will find enclosed, in Annex 1, a description of the main elements of the proposals.

Given the importance of this file and its particular relevance for the European Parliament the Commission services involved in the negotiation of the amendment to the Protocols of the Association Agreement, together with the European External Action Service, have - since 2017- regularly participated in meetings convened by the European Parliament at Committee level (INTA, AFET, AGRI and PECH). Many ad hoc meetings and other contacts with MEPs have also been organised to share information and respond to their queries.

It is in the same spirit that we would like to reiterate our commitment to transparency and communication with the European Parliament and to assure you of our availability to meet with you at your earliest convenience.

We would like to thank you for your interest in this file and to assure you of our entire commitment to work together with the European Parliament to bring about a positive outcome.

Yours sincerely,



Pierre Moscovici



Federica Mogherini

Cc: Mr Lange (Chair of INTA Committee)

Annex: 1