

Brussels, **22 JUN 2018**

Dear Chairman,

With this letter we wish to draw your attention to the adoption by the Commission on 11 June of proposals for Council Decisions for signature and conclusion of an Agreement amending the Protocols of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Morocco¹.

The proposed amendment aims at complying 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 intends to contribute to the economic development of Western Sahara by creating the legal basis for granting wide-ranging tariff preferences to products from Western Sahara.

The proposals follow an inclusive consultation with a broad range of Western Saharan local representatives, civil society and other organisations and bodies, that showed broad support for the socio-economic benefits that the proposed tariff preference would bring. A report accompanying the proposals highlights the benefits of the agreement for the local population.

The draft Agreement is without prejudice to the EU's position on Western Sahara, where the EU continues to support the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General to achieve a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution.

It 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.

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¹ 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).

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

We hope that we can count on your support to ensure its speedy examination and endorsement by the European Parliament, and would like to assure you of our entire commitment to work together with the Parliament to bring about a positive outcome. We and our teams remain at your disposal- and that of any MEP- should you have questions.

Yours sincerely,



Pierre Moscovici



Federica Mogherini