

CC(14)2068:1 –

Mr Karel De Gucht
Commissioner
European Commission
200 Rue de la Loi
BE-1049 Brussels

Brussels, 13th March 2014

Re: support measures to Ukraine

Dear Commissioner,

The Heads of State and Government have decided on a number of support measures to Ukraine in order to contribute to the economic and financial stabilisation of the country.

On this occasion, we would like to remind you that the agricultural community supports the development of a Ukrainian agricultural sector which is based on family holdings and which enables the development of rural areas. With a view to achieving this, Copa-Cogeca signed a memorandum of understanding with the Ukrainian Chambers of Agriculture in 2011 in order to assist the development of agricultural cooperatives. We remain available to support the European Commission's efforts to help the economic recovery of the country.

The support programme to Ukraine also includes the early application of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement negotiated between the European Union and Ukraine. The document European Commission document, "Support measures to Ukraine", page 6 that you have published underscores that the trade agreement must benefit Ukrainian farmers by reducing custom duties. We would like to draw your attention to the risks that this part of the support programme to Ukraine entails:

- In the cereals sector, the unfavourable commercial environment and the lack of transparency of operators acting in Ukraine does not make it possible to ensure that the Ukrainian agricultural sector is the real beneficiary of the trade of grains between the European Union and Ukraine. In this sector, land reform must be a priority to ensure that it is farmers who reap the rewards of their labour. Finally, the recent sanitary crisis linked to the presence of aflatoxins in maize, notably from Ukraine, has demonstrated that this country primarily requires greater sanitary surveillance and follow-up capacity.
- In the livestock sector, Ukraine is unable to cope with the development of the African Swine Fever crisis. This has led to the presence of cases of infection among wild animals on European territory bordering Ukraine. European livestock producers are now dealing with an embargo on their exports to several countries such as Russia, China and Singapore. It is important to develop short-term solutions to manage the sanitary crisis in this country before the implementation of the trade agreement.
- Finally, in the poultrymeat and egg sector, production standards, particularly those for animal welfare, are not equivalent to those of European producers, who recently had to upgrade their production tools. The producers in neighbouring countries to Ukraine will therefore be severely affected by this distortion of competition.

For all of these reasons, we recommend to you that the early application of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with Ukraine should not apply to tariff lines which have been negotiated with tariff quotas. Their early application would only have negative impacts for both Ukrainian and EU farmers.

I wish to inform you that a copy of this letter has been sent to the High Representative of the European union, Baroness Catherine Ashton, as well as your colleague, Mr Cioloş, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development.

We remain at your disposal in order to have a more in-depth exchange on the solutions which can be made available so that the Ukrainian agricultural sector can be based on prosperous family holdings.

Yours faithfully,



Pekka Pesonen
Secretary General

Cc: Commissioner Dacian Cioloş, Baroness Catherine Ashton