



Minutes of the ECR Meeting of September 11, 2012

Attendance: All except Cyprus, Lithuania, Malta, Portugal and Slovenia

1. CETA update

- *Quebec Elections*

EUDEL focused on the recent Quebec elections and their potential impact on CETA. [**DELETED**]

- *Visit of Chancellor Merkel*

EUDEL recalled that on 15 and 16 August Chancellor Merkel and PM Harper had an official meeting in Ottawa. (The German Embassy had already given to MS an extensive debriefing on the visit). Discussions on CETA negotiations figured very high on the agenda and both leaders expressed political support for an ambitious agreement to be concluded rapidly. [**DELETED**] Germany added that the Chancellor's visit covered other bilateral issues and included also a stop in Nova Scotia at Dalhousie University. [**DELETED**]

- *Impact of the vote of the EU on ACTA*

Further to the negative vote of the European Parliament on the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) on the 4th July 2012, an article by a Canadian law professor Michael Geist opened a very controversial debate. Mr Geist claimed that ACTA would be enacted through CETA. These speculations were strongly rejected by the European Commission. The Commission fully respects the Parliament's vote and is currently reviewing CETA's text to make sure that it is fully compatible with the ACTA's rejection.

DG TRADE has published a response for the public that can be found under: <http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/press/index.cfm?id=826>

- *Next Steps*

In terms of next steps in the negotiations, EUDEL confirmed that the next working session will be in Ottawa the week of September 17th. EUDEL informed that Mauro Petriccione, EU Chief Negotiator, will debrief HoMs at the HoM's lunch on September 19th. It is not certain yet whether a full debriefing by the Chief negotiator will be possible by the end of the session. The following working session is scheduled to take place in Brussels by mid-October. As of now, no sessions are scheduled in November.

2. Developments of the Canadian trade policy

- *Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)*

The United States Trade Representative has notified the US Congress of the invitation extended to Canada to join TPP talks. The US Congress has until 8th October 2012 to give its opinion and is currently consulting stakeholders on this issue. [**DELETED**] In case of the expected favourable Congress' opinion, Canada will be able to participate in its first negotiating round (15th TPP round) in December.

- *Signature of the Foreign Investment Protection Agreement (FIPA) with China*

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Chinese President Hu Jintao have signed a bilateral FIPA on the 8th September. The text has not been published yet and DFAIT has informed the EUCAL that it will do so in October.

- *Publication of the Canada-China Economic Complementarities Study*

DFAIT has published the joint study of Canada and China, which provides an analysis of complementarities in several key economic sectors (agriculture, clean technology, machinery and equipment, natural resources, services, textiles and transportation and infrastructure). The study sets the stage for both countries to launch exploratory talks on how bilateral economic relations can be further deepened. Canada refused any reference to a potential free trade agreement and the word "free" does not appear a single time in the study. China, on the contrary, is very much in favour of starting FTA talks. It is to be seen what happens next, but it is very probable that exploratory discussions will be continued.

The study can be found at this link:

<http://www.international.gc.ca/trade-agreements-accords-commerciaux/agr-acc/china-chine/study-comp-etude.aspx?view=d>

- *Canada-ASEAN Business Council*

Canada and ASEAN have institutionalised their relations by creating a bilateral Business Council. Its main focus will be to enhance business cooperation.

DFAIT's press release on the subject, including the list of founding Canadian companies, can be found under:

http://www.international.gc.ca/media_commerce/comm/news-communiques/2012/08/31a.aspx?lang=eng&view=d.

- *Costa Rica*

Canada is in the process of upgrading its existing FTAs. Negotiations are being held to add government procurement, financial services and labour mobility coverage in its agreement with Costa Rica.

3. Other issues

- EUDEL circulated for information a paper copy of the Commission Working Document "External Sources of Growth", found at this link: http://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2012/july/tradoc_149807.pdf.
- EUDEL recalled that at the beginning of the year the ECR group has taken the decision to produce an annual report on economic and trade developments in Canada. EUDEL recalled that it is a joint effort and that MS and EUDEL have already agreed on a tentative table of contents and identified contributors, as reported in the Annexed table (Annex 1). EUDEL recalled that contributions are expected, if possible, before the November ECR or, at the latest, within the end of November.
- EUDEL recalled that further to the ECR visit to Montreal last June, EUDEL and MS should consider the organisation of a similar mission to Toronto. EUDEL underlined that, given the distance, a trip by air seems preferable - but also the feasibility of a trip by bus could be taken into account. EUDEL informed that Porter Airlines may offer favourable corporate rates but in order to profit of advantageous tariffs it will be essential to make a reservation with considerable advance. Considering the time needed to organise the event and the winter season, it could be advisable to plan the trip by March next year. MS supported the idea of the Toronto trip and agreed to discuss this point again in October on the basis of more precise information on logistics. Sweden said that it would be useful to check, amongst other things, EUCOCIT's activity plans for next year.
- EUDEL informed that HR/VP Ashton will be on an official visit in Ottawa on October 1st. The main event will be a meeting with the Canadian Foreign Minister J. Baird, but meetings with Minister Mc Kay and Aglukkaq are also on the agenda. The HR/VP is not supposed to discuss CETA issues. The HR/VP is also likely to debrief EU Embassies about her visit but the time and venue of this event are not confirmed yet.
- EUDEL recalled that the exchange of information and documents between EU Delegation and EU Embassies in Ottawa from now on will have to take place via the online platform AGORA. EUDEL is responsible for the activation and the technical management of the system. In order to make AGORA work it is important that all MS Embassies communicate to EUDEL the complete list of the Embassies' correspondents for each working group.
- EUDEL circulated also an up-dated list of ECR correspondents (Annex 2) asking MS to signal any mistakes or omissions.
- Date of next ECR meeting: 2 October 2012.