



## **Minutes of the ECR Meeting of April 9th, 2013**

**Attendance:** All except Croatia, Cyprus, Hungary, Latvia, Malta, Romania

### **1. CETA update**

EUDEL recalled that during the last three weeks, coinciding with Easter period, there was no negotiations activity and it should resume gradually during the current month of April.

As regards the debate in the Canadian press, EUDEL recalled that CETA continues to attract weekly attention, even if some missed deadlines have somewhat reduced expectations and excitement for the imminent conclusion of the deal. Minister Fast and certain Ministers of State continue their pro-CETA activity, both at federal and provincial level. Around mid-March the leaders of six major business organizations sent a joint letter (attached) to Minister Fast in order to give further support to a rapid CETA conclusion.

Nevertheless, some commentators (chiefly Ibbitson in the Globe and Mail) have underscored that, while CETA is "perpetually on the brink on completion", the Harper trade agenda (possibly the most important characteristic of Harper's foreign policy) thus far is "all talks, no signatures". As CETA is certainly the most advanced of the various Canada's free trade initiatives, there is a clear incentive for the government to conclude these negotiations as soon as possible.

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### **2. Canada Trade Policy developments**

Canada concluded two Foreign Investment Protection Agreements with Zambia and Cameroon in March 2013. Especially the one with Zambia is worth mentioning given that this country hosts around 20% (valued at \$6bn) of all Canadian FDIs in Africa, essentially in the mining sector.

Canada has participated in the 16<sup>th</sup> round of TPP talks that took place in March in Singapore. Trade Minister Ed Fast has mentioned government procurement (notably the abolishment of Buy America provisions) and labour mobility as major Canadian interests in the process.

Canada-Panama FTA entered into force on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013. The agreement, apart from classical FTA provisions, also covers government procurement.

Two candidates (from Mexico and Indonesia) for the position of the WTO Secretary General have recently visited Ottawa to lobby for their candidacies.

### **3. New Federal budget: trade elements**

EUDEL gave a short debrief on the following trade-related aspects of the recent 2013 federal budget:

- the merger of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) into the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). EUDEL commented that this may lead to more coherence between Canada's foreign policy and Canada's international development policy;
- tariff relief on imports of baby clothing and sports and athletic equipment, effective 1 April 2013;
- the removal of Canada's General Preferential Tariff (GPT) treatment for about 72 "higher-income and export-competitive" countries, including all G-20 countries and China, effective 1 January 2015;
- the government reiterated its intention to "refresh" its Global Commerce Strategy "in the coming months". The Global Commerce Strategy outlines Canada's international trade and investment priorities;
- the government also reiterated its intention to consolidate Canada's trade remedy investigation functions under the Canadian International Trade Tribunal (CITT);
- the government will try again to create a national securities regulator to replace the 10 individual provincial security regulators; and
- the powers of Canada's export credit agency, Export Development Canada (EDC) will be modified to allow it to continue to provide financing in the domestic credit market, but limited to providing it in a manner that "complements" private sector lenders.

### **4. Toronto Trip: feedback and future activities**

EUDEL has thanked all Member States that provided evaluation of the ECR trip to Toronto in March. Most have judged the trip as very positive.

In terms of logistics, several Member States would have liked to have a bit less busy schedule and have the bus to facilitate transportation between various venues. EUDEL has explained that renting a bus in Toronto is very costly.

In terms of evaluation of individual sessions, meeting with Scotiabank's chief economist was by far the one that received most of positive feedback.

Meetings with Toronto Stock Exchange economist, intellectual property lawyer, Ontario government representatives and EUCOCIT / EUCCAN were also judged positively.

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This has prompted the EUDEL to propose the publishing of a "EU in Canada newsletter" with a distribution to various EU entities in Canada (Consuls, Trade Representatives, Chambers of Commerce) in order to keep EU actors in Canada informed of Ottawa based activities. EUDEL also envisages periodical meetings with EU representatives in Toronto and Montreal.

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## **5. 2013 Annual report: sharing tasks for drafting**

EUDEL circulated a table of contents (attached) for the drafting of the 2013 ECR Annual Report and asked MS to consider, on a voluntary basis, which part of the report they would like to draft. EUDEL said that at the ECR meeting in May we should have already a clear idea about who does what and, in this spirit, invited MS to communicate to the Delegation their respective drafting proposal before the end of April. MS are also invited to propose other possible areas or sub-chapters if they deem it important.

In addition to the chapters drafted by EUDEL, the following MS have already volunteered in the indicated areas:

Italy (Chapter 2, with FR; Chapter 5 as lead, open to share this with another MS)

France (Chapter 2, with IT)

Spain (Chapter 5)

Poland (Chapter 3/manufacturing)

United Kingdom (Chapter 7, Telecommunications)

Portugal (Chapter 12, Energy)

## **6. Any other business**

### ***Going Green Conference***

Going Green took place on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> March in the Palais des Congrès, Montréal, within the overall framework of the *Americana 2013 Conference*. The conference, organized by the EU, had the objective to promote a positive image of the EU with a particular emphasis on efficient workable green technologies and the potential positive impact this brings to the economy. It was a one-day seminar focusing on the green low-carbon economy. The event provided a valuable opportunity to relay to a general as well as a specialist audience in Canada how the EU's green policies are linked to opportunities for economic growth, how they are being implemented at various levels and how they affect communities.

The event was structured around three main themes: energy efficiency, best practices at the municipal level and making smart choices for a sustainable future. The conference began with a keynote presentation by acclaimed economist Jeremy Rifkin, president of the Foundation on Economic Trends and best-selling author. Environment Minister Peter Kent provided a comprehensive update on Canadian environmental policy developments while also vehemently criticizing the proposed implementing regulations of the Fuel Quality Directive (FQD). A silent and civil protest by Greenpeace activists distracted the audience for a few minutes.

### ***Presentation by Prof. Chojna-Duch on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.***

EUDEL announced that on Tuesday April 23<sup>rd</sup> it will host a presentation by Prof. Elzbieta Chojna-Duch. Prof. Chojna-Duch, who was twice Polish Deputy Minister of Finance and is currently a Member of the Monetary Policy Council of the National Bank of Poland, will speak about the current economic problems of the Euro-zone and share her ideas on a possible future economic integration process in the European Union. All ECR colleagues are invited.

**7. Presentation by Jayson Meyers, CEO of Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters (CME) about the establishment of the European enterprise network (EEN) in Canada.**

Please refer to the attached power point presentation.

**8. Next ECR meeting**

The next ECR meeting will take place on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

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