Resolution on the prospects for the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) following the Seventh WTO Ministerial Conference

2009/2730(RSP) - 16/12/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 14 December 2009, the European Parliament adopted by 370 votes to 125 against with 125 a resolution on the prospects for the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) following the Seventh WTO Ministerial Conference. The resolution was tabled by the ALDE, ECR and EPP groups. It reiterates its commitment to the multilateral trading system and the WTO as the guarantor of a rules-based trade system, and believes that the WTO has a key role to play in ensuring better management of globalisation and more equitable distribution of its benefits. Parliament encourages WTO Members to remain committed to actively fighting protectionism in all their bilateral and multilateral trade relations and future agreements.

DDA (Doha Development Agenda): Parliament calls on the WTO Members to deliver on the ambitious goals set out in the 2001 Doha Ministerial Declaration in order to ensure that the current trade round is a development round and that it contributes to the achievement of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. It believes that a successful conclusion of the DDA could be an important parameter in stimulating worldwide economic recovery after the financial and economic crisis

Members call on the developed countries and the emerging economies to follow the EU Everything but Arms initiative, offering 100% duty-free, quota-free market access for the LDCs. They emphasises also the importance of an enhanced framework for Aid for Trade. The Commission is asked to pursue the objectives set out in the negotiating mandate as regards protection of geographical indications and intellectual property rights , market access for industrial goods and services and public procurement in both developed and developing countries, and minimum requirements for environmental and social standards. Parliament encourages the EU to play a leading role in promoting tangible progress in the ongoing WTO negotiations with a view to concluding the Doha Round, as well as facilitating the full participation of developing countries and LDCs in global trade by acting as a bridge between the various positions of the WTO Members.

Agriculture: Parliament calls on the Commission:

- to comply strictly with its negotiating mandate from the Council, which sets the already completed CAP reform as the limit of its action, provided that equivalent concessions are obtained from its trading partners, and to defend strongly the EU position on geographical indications;

- in the context of the banana agreement which is in its concluding phase, to provide ACP and Community producers with genuine legal certainty and to ensure that account is taken of the financial consequences of the agreement.

Developed countries and emerging economies must ensure that the agreement gives developing countries the use of the policy tools they need in order to defend and develop their agriculture sector and local food production, to raise rural living standards and to enhance food security (i.e. universal access to adequate levels of food at affordable prices). Parliament calls therefore for the inclusion in the agreement of clear provisions for special and differential treatment, especially with respect to special products and specific safeguard mechanisms.

Non-agricultural market access (NAMA): Parliament calls for ambitious results in the negotiations on NAMA, guaranteeing real new market-access opportunities through substantial cuts in applied rates, while allowing for special and differential treatment.

Services: Members urge the Commission to maintain a firm negotiating stance aimed at genuinely enhanced market access for EU products and services in both developed and emerging economies. They call for talks with a view to further liberalisation of services in general, while preserving WTO Members' national policy objectives and their right to regulate public services.

Reform of the WTO: Parliament stresses the importance of a parliamentary dimension to the WTO. It calls on the Commission to play an active role in the future institutional reform of the WTO and in the promotion of a WTO parliamentary assembly. Members want enhanced cooperation between the WTO and other international organisations and bodies such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Unctad), in order to ensure mutual supportiveness and consistency between trade and non-trade concerns. They support efforts aiming for the adoption of international standards and regulatory cooperation.

Treaty of Lisbon: Members urge the Commission to associate Parliament closely in the ongoing negotiations. They point out the need to renegotiate the Framework Agreement on relations between the Parliament and the Commission in order to reflect the trade provisions of the Treaty of Lisbon whereby EU trade policy must be subject to more rigorous democratic scrutiny. Parliament intends to revise that Agreement in order to establish full participation by Parliament in the EU's international trade negotiations, ensuring in particular that, in the event of a formal request from Parliament, the Council will agree not to authorise the opening of negotiations until Parliament has stated its position on the proposed negotiating mandate on the basis of a report from the committee responsible. It also wants to be informed before the negotiations open, of the chosen legal basis, and ensure that, if at any stage of the negotiation Parliament adopts recommendations regarding the conduct of negotiations, the Commission will take Parliament's opinion into account before the conclusion of an agreement.