Resolution on the state of play of the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda

2011/2743(RSP) - 14/09/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled by the Committee on International Trade on the state of play of the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda (DDA).

Noting that the Eighth WTO Ministerial Conference (MC 8) will take place in Geneva on 15–17 December 2011 in order to conclude the Doha Round stalled at the end of July 2008, Parliament reiterates its full commitment to the multilateral trading system and the WTO as the guarantor of a rules-based trade system, as well as to a balanced and fair conclusion of the DDA, which must place development at the heart of the DDA. The negotiations should focus primarily on the needs of the least-developed, countries, with the outcome of the DDA contributing to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Whilst regretting that it will not be possible to reach an agreement on the outstanding issues under the Doha Development Agenda at the Eighth Ministerial Conference in Geneva on 15–17 December 2011, Members stress the importance of nevertheless being able to deliver results and tangible progress, in order not to undermine the multilateral trading system and its rule-making role. They call on the WTO Members to deliver on the goals set out in the 2001 Doha Ministerial Declaration and the commitments made in the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong in 2005.

They firmly believe that the Eighth WTO Ministerial Conference needs to deliver at least in favour of the LDCs, and **an agreement should at a minimum include a comprehensive package for LDCs and developing countries consisting of:**

- duty- and quota-free market access for LDC products for at least 97% of all tariff lines, as agreed in Hong Kong in 2005;
- elimination by developed countries of export subsidies for cotton in line with previous agreements, as well as concrete commitments to expeditiously and specifically reducing domestic trade-distorting subsidies for cotton;
- special and differential treatment in line with previous agreements, including a services waiver and a Special and Differential Treatment Monitoring Mechanism;
- improved preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs in order to ensure that they are transparent and simple, and contribute to facilitating market access;

Members go on to call on all developed and advanced developing countries to follow the model of the EU's **‘everything but arms’ initiative** in guaranteeing 100% duty- and quota-free market access for LDCs, as the tariff lines left out in the Hong Kong agreement cover some crucial products for the poor countries, and therefore substantially reduce the benefits for the LDCs. Emerging economies are urged to assume their responsibilities as global economic players and to make concessions commensurate with their level of development and competitiveness. Members consider, furthermore, that the progress achieved so far in the negotiations on trade facilitation would make it possible to reach an early agreement in this area, as an improvement in the WTO rules on trade facilitation would benefit all WTO Members by enhancing legal certainty, lowering the costs of trade transactions and preventing abuse.

With regard to reform of the structure, Parliament considers, due to the persistent deadlock in the original architecture and objectives of the DDA, that it is now more necessary than ever to resume the debate on the future functioning of the WTO with a **possible reform of the new multilateral trading system**. It calls on the Commission to consult proactively with Parliament on a shared vision of the architecture of a

future global trading system; in the current context of the economic and social crises, and even if the DDA is not concluded, urges the WTO, along with other international organisations, to tackle new global challenges in which trade plays a part, such as food security, energy, sustainable development and Aid for Trade. WTO members are also to support the establishment of strong institutional links between the WTO and other international organisations such as the ILO, FAO, UNCTAD, UNFCCC and other UN organisations.

Parliament adds that it is disappointed that, to date, it has not proved possible to take account of aspects such as **climate protection and environmental protection** in multilateral trade talks. It calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that Parliament is closely involved in the preparation of the Eighth Ministerial Conference in Geneva on 15-17 December 2011.