Autonomous trade preferences for Moldova

2014/0250(COD) - 05/12/2014 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on International Trade adopted the report by Sorin MOIS (S&D, RO) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Council Regulation (EC) No 55 /2008 introducing autonomous trade preferences for the Republic of Moldova.

It recommended the European Parliament to adopt its position at first reading, taking over the Commission proposal.

In recent years, the EU and Moldova intensified their political and economic relations notably through the conclusion of an Association Agreement. The Agreement, signed on 27 June 2014, includes a trade pillar, which will lead to the creation of a "**Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area**" (DCFTA) between the Parties. The DCFTA has been provisionally applied since 1 September 2014.

Due to the intensification of economic and political relations between the EU and Moldova, **a politically motivated import ban was imposed as of 21 July 2014 by Russia on agricultural products from Moldova**. The ban is hurting Moldova's economy in a significant way - agriculture represents around 40% of Moldova's economy.

Seeking some relief and support at this critical juncture, the Moldovan authorities have turned to the EU, requesting urgent support to reduce the economic impact of the Russian ban, in particular for the most important products for Moldovan fruit growers: apples, plums and table grapes.

Consequently, as an act of solidarity, the Commission proposed to amend the Autonomous trade preferences Regulation (ATP Regulation) by introducing three new duty-free tariff rate quotas (TRQs) in addition to the TRQs proposed under the DCFTA.

The total imports from Moldova of these products will have a negligible impact on the EU budget. In light of this, Members called on the European Parliament to approve the Commission proposal without amendments.