

Resolution on multilateral negotiations in view of the WTO's 14th Ministerial Conference in Yaoundé, 26 to 29 March 2026

2025/2875(RSP) - 12/03/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on multilateral negotiations in view of the WTO's 14th Ministerial Conference in Yaoundé, 26 to 29 March 2026.

WTO modernisation

Parliament reiterated its full commitment to the enduring value of multilateralism and underlined that a modernised multilateral system to govern trade is essential. It called for a trade agenda based on open and fair rules-based trade for the benefit of all, which contributes to sustainable economic development, thereby strengthening peace and security.

Members called on the WTO to move towards convening annual ministerial conferences, in place of the current biennial cycle, so as to strengthen political steering, accountability and the capacity of the WTO to respond in a timely manner to global trade challenges. The WTO members are called on to adopt a comprehensive package reviewing the monitoring, negotiating, deliberative and dispute-settlement functions of the WTO. Members fully support the facilitator-led process on WTO modernisation and its agenda for the 14th Ministerial Conference on comprehensive modernisation and agrees with the three tracks proposed by the facilitator, namely governance, fairness (level playing field and balanced trade) and 'issues of our time'. The resolution called for the approval of a **clear roadmap for reform** during the 14th Ministerial Conference, in order to ensure that modernisation can be agreed at the 15th Ministerial Conference.

Regarding tariffs, Parliament regretted the increase in protectionist trade policies across the globe and the US decision to impose additional tariffs on imports from trading partners, including the EU, breaking away from the most-favoured nation principle without any justification. It called on the United States to constructively engage with WTO members in strengthening rather than undermining the multilateral trading system, thereby showing global leadership.

The resolution noted China's decision to renounce WTO special and differential treatment benefits in future WTO deals, as other large developing members have already done. It recalled that China's extensive use of state-owned enterprises, non-transparent subsidies and state-led industrial policies continues to create significant overcapacities and distortions in global trade. Moreover, Parliament deplored China's weaponisation of trade and dependencies and its system of export controls that lack dual-use justifications.

Members stressed the need to strengthen and mainstream the development dimension of the WTO, including through the WTO modernisation process, by recognising the diversity of developing countries' economic situations and avoiding a one-size-fits-all application of special and differential treatment.

On agriculture, Parliament stressed the need to make progress in the agriculture negotiations to obtain credible outcomes on issues such as public stockholding for food security purposes, domestic support, market access, cotton, export restrictions and export competition, and the strengthening of the agricultural sector to respond to contemporary challenges including rural livelihoods and environmental sustainability.

On digital trade, Members called on the WTO members to support the incorporation of the Agreement on Electronic Commerce into the WTO framework as a matter of priority. This agreement sets the first global rules for digital trade, creating a fair, predictable and transparent framework that benefits consumers and businesses by facilitating cross-border transactions, reducing barriers and promoting innovation and trust. Parliament highlighted the growing importance of artificial intelligence (AI) systems in international trade and called, in this context, for increased international cooperation on AI regulations and policies, while respecting the right to regulate of WTO members.

Lastly, concerning Parliamentary involvement, while commending the important work of the joint European Parliament and Inter-Parliamentary Union Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, Parliament stressed the need to ensure that parliamentarians have better access to all trade negotiations and are involved in the formulation and implementation of WTO decisions.