

Brussels, 30. 06. 2010  
DL/yw A(10)1177 – D(10)608

Dear Mr Taxell,

Thank you for your letter of 14<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and your kind words of congratulations for the conclusion of the multiparty trade agreement with Peru and Colombia and of the Association Agreement with Central America. The Commission services will continue working hard to finish the necessary legal check and translation of the texts so that they could be available for signature as soon as possible.

I am also grateful for your message of support regarding the European Commission's recent decision to relaunch the negotiations for an Association Agreement with Mercosur. The Commission fully shares your view that an ambitious FTA, concluded under the trade pillar of this Association Agreement, could bring considerable benefits to economic actors of both regions, be they exporters, services providers or investors, and that this agreement could be instrumental in setting the conditions for a good and stable business climate. It is also true that such an agreement would give a positive signal in the current context that both regions are still committed to free commercial relations and to reject protectionism.

In addition, I am also aware that services and investment represent a significant part of our economic interests in the region, and that an ambitious agreement in these sectors would be of considerable value to EU services providers and investors. Our intention is to build upon offers expressed in the context of the DDA negotiations.

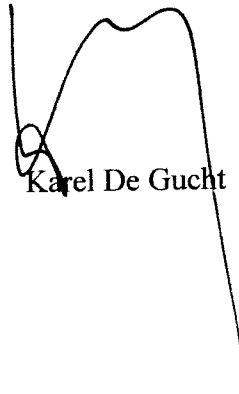
I take note of the priority sectors you have identified in your letter and assure you that we will take these elements, as well as any additional input received during the ongoing consultation of the industry, into account during the negotiations.

While we are fully committed to strive for a conclusion of these negotiations, we should nevertheless be aware that, as President Barroso expressed after the EU-Mercosur Summit on 17 May, substantial efforts will be needed by both sides and we will only conclude if the substance is right. This is true for all the chapters of the agreement, including the one related to services and investment.

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Let me finally use this opportunity to thank the ESF for its very useful work in coordinating the views of the EU services industry for EU-Mercosur negotiations as well as for other negotiations. It is my conviction that while an EU-Mercosur Association Agreement could prove greatly beneficial to all actors in the EU and in Mercosur, the business community has a key role to play, and its support to the negotiation process is essential at all stages.

Sincerely yours,



Karel De Gucht