

Mr Jyrki Katainen
Vice President
European Commission
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 - Brussels
BELGIUM

Brussels, 29 November 2017

Subject : European Services Industry call for the conclusion of an ambitious EU-MERCOSUR Trade Agreement

Dear Vice-President Katainen,

I would like to express the support of the European services sectors to conclude an ambitious EU-Mercosur trade agreement, with significant commitments in services.

We understand that agricultural trade with the Mercosur countries is an important issue that must be handled with tact and balance, but it is at least equally important that services interests are taken into consideration.

The total exports of services by the EU to Mercosur amounted to 21.3 € billion in 2015 or 31.5% of the total volume of exports in goods and services. In 2015, the EU surplus in trade in services of +9.75 € billion was twice the surplus of trade in goods. These figures show the strategic importance of trade in services with the region. It could be much higher, should the existing barriers, which our companies encounter be eliminated or reduced.

We call upon the EU negotiators to ensure that a deal will seriously improve Mercosur's commitments in services, as well as improve market access and conditions in public procurement. We provided to the Commission services all the necessary information relevant for specific services sectors. Allow me, however, to highlight again our particular interest in better commitments and rules in respect to telecommunications, financial, maritime transport and energy related services. Moreover, provisions guaranteeing flows of data are crucial for service providers across sectors to take full advantage of the business opportunities in the Mercosur countries.

We gather that negotiations are approaching a final phase and would like to encourage the European Union to seize the historic opportunity to finalise the agreement with such important trade partners. In this period of uncertainty in international trade and following the political agreement with Japan, it is again a good moment for the EU to demonstrate leadership to the rest of the world.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Noel Clehane'.

Noel Clehane
ESF Chairman

Cc: European Commissioner for Trade, Ms. Cecilia Malmström
European Commissioner for Agriculture, Mr. Phil Hogan