



# EUROPEAN SHIPPERS' COUNCIL

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Shippers call on European Commission to reinforce its actions in trade

In its position paper to the European Commission's Directorate-General for Trade, European Shippers' Council has outlined the main priorities the organisation sees for the new EC legislative term. These concern a stronger focus on facilitation in Free Trade Agreements and a better harmonisation of FTAs to enable their application; a stronger role for the EU in deescalating tension between partners in world trade; and as seamless Brexit as possible that stays an urgent matter for shippers.

#### **EU to remain focused on trade facilitation and economic development while initiating new trade agreements**

Free Trade Agreements, though aiming at facilitating trade, still contain unnecessary barriers. Broad FTAs often take a long time to be completed, as they cover many other subjects besides trade that are often difficult to achieve because of political sensitiveness. The examples of Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and the negotiations on Mercosur demonstrate that such agreements may take more than 10 years to be finalised. Additionally, to ease the application of FTAs for importers and exporters, it is important that FTAs are harmonised.

#### **EU needs to act as a strategic and influential bloc in global trade**

On the global level, ESC requests the European Commission to use its position as the biggest trading block to deescalate the present tense climate which results in trade wars such as the one between the US and the EU. To settle global trade disputes and create stability in world trade, a well-functioning global trade organization is indispensable. Therefore, ESC asks the Commission to take a firm stance regarding the US blockage of the reappointment of judges in the World Trade Organization's Appellate Body.

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## Seamless Brexit

Brexit is a short-term priority that will probably have a significant impact on the trade between the UK and the EU27 in the years or decades to come. Shippers call for making the UK exit from the EU as seamless as possible.

ESC hopes to continue working with DG TRADE in a constructive way. In the last years the Commission has succeeded to negotiate trade agreements with important countries and regions such as Canada, Japan, and Mercosur.

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