



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

STATEMENT

Brussels, 9 October 2014

Statement by EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht after his meeting with Ukraine minister Klimkin

'I was pleased to receive Ukraine's Foreign Affairs Minister Klimkin here in Brussels today. It was our first meeting since 12 September 2014 when, together with Russia, we reached an agreement on the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement with an important trade part (the Deep and Comprehensive Free-Trade Area). The Ukrainian Rada and the European Parliament shortly after on 16 September 2014 ratified the agreement in a historical moment. I congratulated Minister Klimkin on this event and reiterated the EU's commitment to work on the basis of the joint statement reached on 12 September. This statement is part and parcel of a comprehensive peace process in Ukraine, respecting Ukraine's territorial integrity and the right of Ukraine to decide on its destiny.

As it was agreed, the EU proposed additional flexibility to the Council with a delay of the provisional application of the trade part of the AA (i.e. the DCFTA) until 31 December 2015. I also told the minister that the EU is fully supporting the stabilisation of Ukraine. With this in mind, the Commission proposed on 19 September 2014¹ to extend unilaterally the autonomous trade measures that are in force until 1 November 2014. These measures consist in removing customs duties on Ukrainian exports to the EU. Now it's up to the European Parliament and the Council to decide.

I explained to minister Klimkin that the Council and the European Parliament have discussed the proposal of the Commission to extend these autonomous trade preferences for Ukraine (Regulation (EU) No 374/2014) until 31 December 2015. Discussions indicate that there is strong political support both in the Council and the Parliament to extend these measures as soon as possible. All Member States and large political groups at the EP support an extension of ATMs and to proceed as fast as possible. Despite attempts to block the fast track by a small number of MEPs, the legislative procedure is well on track and there are strong political indications that Parliament and Council will manage to agree on an extension of the autonomous trade preferences in October 2014.

We have also discussed the provisional application of the Association Agreement. Minister Klimkin welcomed the decision of the EU governments on provisional application of the Association Agreement. I confirmed that on the EU side we will do all we can to help Ukraine to adequately prepare for the implementation of the AA from 1 November 2014 and the its trade part, the DCFTA, as of 2016.

I also wished Minister Klimkin luck and determination to continue the process of reforms and economic modernisation of Ukraine. The EU will of course continue to support these efforts.

¹ <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2014/EN/1-2014-597-EN-F1-1.Pdf>

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