

Question for written answer E-002497/2017
to the Commission
Rule 130
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)

Subject: A new wave of global trade protectionism that is detrimental to the Union and our partners

Trade protectionism, i.e. any activities that discriminate foreign entities, is the reason for a decrease of trade between countries and it frequently contributes to the impoverishment of its citizens. Unfortunately, since the beginning of the financial crisis, the number and pace of passing protectionist regulations have increased significantly. Most provisions of this kind are implemented in the United States and in BRIC countries.

The WTO reported that in 2015, 178 new provisions of law were introduced that intentionally limited trade, and this situation deteriorated even more in 2016. Protectionist policies apply mostly to trading fossil fuels, agricultural products or electric machines. As a consequence, we observe a ridiculous situation where some States increase the quantity of protectionist provisions whereas on the other hand they apply protective measures (such as anti-dumping duties, retaliatory tariffs, protective quotas, etc.) against their trading partners who undertake identical steps. Unfortunately, those that lose out the most from these types of policy are poor and developing countries.

Because the Union is one of the biggest donors in the world. Thus, on the one hand, we are trying to help those poor and less developed countries to catch up in their social and economic lagging behind, and on the other hand, our protectionist attempts destroy our endeavours.

Therefore, I wish to ask whether the Commission is planning to undertake – both within multilateral organisations such as the WTO and as a part of bilateral relations – any action in order to confine this harmful phenomenon?