



**Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée Parlementaire Euro-Latino Américaine
Asamblea Parlamentaria Euro-Latin American
Assembleia Parlamentar Euro-Latino-Americana**



**EURO-LATIN AMERICAN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY
Committee on Economic, Financial and Commercial Affairs**

28 September 2009

PROVISIONAL

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

Reform of the World Trade Organisation;

EP co-rapporteur:

LA co-rapporteur: (Parlandino)

Reform of the World Trade Organisation

The Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly,

- having regard to its declaration of 9 November 2006,
 - having regard to its resolutions of 19 December 2007 on the challenges and opportunities resulting from globalisation for economic and trade relations between the European Union and the countries of Latin America, of 1 May 2008 on the challenges and opportunities of the Doha Round and of 8 April 2009 on trade and climate change,
 - having regard to the declarations made at the five summits of Heads of State and Government of Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union, held respectively in Rio de Janeiro (28-29 June 1999), Madrid (17-18 May 2002), Guadalajara (28-29 May 2004), Vienna (11-13 May 2006) and Lima (16-17 May 2008),
 - having regard to the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organisation,
 - having regard to the declarations of the WTO Ministerial Conference, adopted in Doha on 14 November 2001 and in Hong Kong on 18 December 2005,
 - having regard to the report of January 2005 of the Advisory Board chaired by Peter Sutherland on the future of the WTO,
 - having regard to paragraph 56 of the Hong Kong Declaration, on the necessary steps to ensure the full involvement and assistance of key UN agencies including the ILO in WTO processes and in the current negotiations,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Economic, Financial and Commercial Affairs,
- A. whereas the WTO plays a key role among the multilateral organisations which contribute to international economic governance,
 - B. whereas the least economically advanced countries would suffer most if the Doha Round talks are not kept firmly on course,
 - C. whereas over and beyond the immediate concerns regarding the conclusion of the Round, preparations now need to begin for the post-Doha period,
 - D. whereas an important analysis of the future of the WTO and the institutional challenges it faces was carried out as far back as 2004 by the Advisory Board chaired by Peter Sutherland, but no practical action has yet been taken with regard to the recommendations set out in the report delivered by the said Advisory Board to the WTO Director-General in January 2005,
 - E. whereas it is now a matter of urgency to relaunch this debate and to fundamentally review several aspects of the functioning of the WTO with a view to increasing both its effectiveness and its legitimacy,
 - F. whereas some developing countries do not even have a delegation in Geneva and other delegations are understaffed and not always able to keep abreast of discussions and negotiations and are, therefore, unable to influence the measures adopted,
 - G. whereas the institutional debate in the WTO on the reform of this organisation is in no way incompatible with the continuation and conclusion of the Doha Round,

1. Attaches the utmost importance to safeguarding what has so far been achieved by the multilateral trade system;
2. Considers that the WTO is the ideal body to promote security, transparency and stability in world trade and can be both an economic stabilising factor in times of turbulence and a catalyst for economic growth;
3. Calls on the international community to continue the work begun at the Doha Round of 2001 and stresses its firm commitment to contributing to the success of the Doha Round,
4. Believes that a strong WTO with a rules-based international trade system offers opportunities for developing countries to eradicate poverty; regrets that limited resources put developing countries at a disadvantage when negotiating;
5. Considers that it is now more necessary than ever to resume the debate on the decision-making process, mandate, functioning and future of the WTO with a view to the possible reform of this organisation;
6. Calls on the European Commission and all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to present, as soon as possible, a strong initiative in Geneva with a view to relaunching this debate;
7. Considers that the institutional structure of the WTO could be improved by more clearly distinguishing the activities relating to the negotiation of new rules and commitments from those relating to the implementation of existing agreements;
8. Considers it neither realistic nor desirable to call into question the principle of consensus in the WTO decision-making process, which guarantees the equality of all members; takes the view, however, that various solutions could be examined to produce constructive results at certain key moments;
9. Points out that equal and effective participation by all members, particularly the least developed countries (LDCs), must be given priority consideration in any reform of the multilateral trade system;
10. Considers it essential to increase the active participation of developing countries in this process and provide technical assistance, so that they feel fully represented in the negotiating process and are able to express and defend their own trade interests, for instance by introducing a system of representation by coalition;
11. Calls on those participating in the debate to consider the problems linked to holding long-term 'rounds' of negotiations, involving all 153 WTO members in discussions on a wide range of subjects on the basis of a 'single undertaking'; acknowledges the historical merits of this approach in establishing and developing the multilateral trade system and allowing for its progressive liberalisation and reciprocal and mutually beneficial commitments but believes that other, more flexible and effective formulas could be used in future;
12. Calls for a redefinition of the role and format of Ministerial Conferences;
13. Suggests that some leeway could also be given to the WTO Secretariat, allowing it to take initiatives of institutional interest, propose compromise formulas in the case of deadlock, or even chair the meetings of certain bodies, in the interest of continuity and impartiality;

14. Considers it necessary to strengthen the financial and human resources available to the WTO Secretariat and believes that it is important that the Secretariat has a proportionate representation of officials from developed and developing countries;
15. Considers that transparency in the drawing-up and implementation of trade policies represents a legitimate demand on the part of society, citizens and parliamentarians; welcomes the genuine progress achieved by the WTO in terms of external transparency since its establishment in 1995, and the effectiveness of its communication policy;
16. Recalls that parliamentarians, as elected representatives of the citizens, have an important role to play in trade negotiations and, in particular, in WTO negotiations; stresses the need to create a WTO parliamentary assembly with consultative powers;
17. Stresses the importance of the work done by the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, which is organised jointly by the European Parliament and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, by (1) scrutinising the activities of the WTO and helping to make them more effective and fair, (2) promoting transparency in WTO procedures and improving the discussion process between governments, parliaments and civil society and (3) developing expertise on international trade in the national parliaments and influencing the course of discussions in the WTO; calls on WTO members to provide sufficient support to their parliamentarians to take part in the development of a parliamentary dimension to the WTO;
18. Believes that more consistency is needed between initiatives and decisions adopted by the WTO and those taken by other international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation and other UN bodies;
19. Takes the view that the WTO dispute settlement procedure has, on the whole, fulfilled its role satisfactorily, but that certain adjustments are necessary, including in relation to the length of the procedures involved and the effective implementation of decisions;
20. Advocates that, under the dispute settlement procedure, the substantive meetings with the parties, special groups and the Appellate Body should in future be held in public as is usual for court hearings, and that the documents concerned should be publicly available, except in rare and duly justified cases;

*

* *

21. Instructs its Co-Presidents to forward this resolution to the Presidency of the Sixth EU-LAC Summit, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission, the Parliaments of all the EU Member States and all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Latin American Parliament, the Central American Parliament, the Andean Parliament and the Mercosur Parliament.