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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0250/2016**

17.2.2016

## **MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION**

further to Question for Oral Answer B8-0101/2016

pursuant to Rule 128(5) of the Rules of Procedure

on the opening of FTA negotiations with Australia and New Zealand  
(2015/2932(RSP))

**Bernd Lange, Daniel Caspary**  
on behalf of the Committee on International Trade

**European Parliament resolution on the opening of FTA negotiations with Australia and New Zealand  
(2015/2932(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission Communication of 14 October 2015 entitled ‘Trade for All – Towards a more responsible trade and investment policy’ (COM(2015)0497),
- having regard to the joint statements by the President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, and the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, with the Prime Minister of New Zealand, John Key, of 29 October 2015, and with the Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Turnbull, of 15 November 2015,
- having regard to the EU-Australia Partnership Framework of 29 October 2008 and the EU-New Zealand Joint Declaration on Relations and Cooperation of 21 September 2007,
- having regard to other EU-Australia bilateral agreements, in particular the Agreement on mutual recognition in relation to conformity assessment, certificates and markings and the Agreement on trade in wine,
- having regard to other EU-New Zealand bilateral agreements, in particular the Agreement on sanitary measures applicable to trade in live animals and animal products and the Agreement on mutual recognition in relation to conformity assessment,
- having regard to its earlier resolutions, in particular those of 12 September 2012 on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and Australia amending the Agreement on mutual recognition<sup>1</sup> and of 12 September 2012 on the draft Council decision on the conclusion of the Agreement between the European Union and New Zealand amending the Agreement on mutual recognition<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to the communiqué issued following the G20 meeting of Heads of State and Government held in Brisbane on 15-16 November 2014,
- having regard to the joint declaration of 22 April 2015 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Australian Foreign Minister entitled ‘Towards a closer EU-Australia Partnership’ and to the joint declaration of 25 March 2014 by President Van Rompuy, President Barroso and Prime Minister Key on deepening the partnership between New Zealand and the European Union,
- having regard to the sensitive nature of certain agricultural sectors in these negotiations,
- having regard to the already significant number of agreements being negotiated between

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C 353 E, 3.12.2013, p. 210.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 353 E, 3.12.2013, p. 210.

the EU and its main trading partners,

- having regard to Articles 207(3) and 218 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
  - having regard to the question to the Commission on the opening of FTA negotiations with Australia and New Zealand (O-000154/2015 – B8-0101/2016),
  - having regard to Rules 128(5) and 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Australia and New Zealand are among the EU's oldest and closest partners, sharing common values and committed to promoting prosperity and security within a rules-based system globally;
- B. whereas the EU, Australia and New Zealand work together in tackling common challenges across a broad spectrum of issues and cooperate in a number of international fora;
- C. whereas the EU and New Zealand are parties to, and Australia is in the process of acceding to, the Agreement on Government Procurement;
- D. whereas the EU, Australia and New Zealand are engaged in plurilateral negotiations to further liberalise trade in green goods (Environmental Goods Agreement) and trade in services (TiSA);
- E. whereas Australia and New Zealand are both parties to the recently concluded negotiations for a Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the ongoing negotiations on a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in East Asia, uniting Australia's and New Zealand's most important trading partners;
- F. whereas Australia and New Zealand are two of only six WTO members for which there is still no preferential access to the EU market or negotiations in progress to that end;
- G. whereas Australia and New Zealand are two countries which are fully characterised by the rule of law and which currently offer strong protection for the environment and for human, social and labour rights;
- H. whereas the conclusion of the EU-Australia and EU-New Zealand free trade agreements will deepen the trade and investment relationship and whereas it could not be contemplated if the agreements adversely affected the ability of the parties to introduce, maintain or enhance their social, environmental or labour standards;
- I. whereas the EU concluded negotiations on the EU-New Zealand Partnership Agreement on Relations and Cooperation (PARC) on 30 July 2014 and on the EU-Australia Framework Agreement (FA) on 22 April 2015;
- J. whereas the EU is the third most important trading partner for both Australia and New Zealand, which are respectively the EU's twenty first and fifty-first largest trading partners (2014);
- K. whereas New Zealand is one of the few countries to be recognised by the Commission

as having an adequate level of private data protection;

- L. whereas the conclusion of modern, ambitious, balanced and comprehensive agreements would bring economic relations up to a new level;
- M. whereas Parliament will be required to decide whether to give its consent to the potential EU-Australia and EU-New Zealand FTAs;
1. Underlines the importance of deepening relations between the EU and the Asia-Pacific region for economic growth within Europe and stresses that this is reflected in the European Union's trade policy; recognises that Australia and New Zealand are a key part of this strategy and that widening and deepening trade with these partners can help to meet this goal;
  2. Commends both Australia and New Zealand for their strong and consistent commitment to the multilateral trade agenda;
  3. Considers that the full potential of the Union's bilateral and regional cooperation strategies can only be realised by concluding high-quality FTAs with both Australia and New Zealand in a spirit of reciprocity and mutual benefit while under no circumstances undermining or diverting resources and attention away from the ambition to achieve progress multilaterally or the implementation of already concluded multilateral and bilateral agreements;
  4. Believes that the negotiation of two separate, modern, ambitious, balanced and comprehensive FTAs with Australia and New Zealand in accordance with the specific features of those economies is a pragmatic way of deepening the bilateral partnerships and further reinforcing the existing, already mature bilateral trade and investment relationships, and would help mitigate the potential diversionary effects of the recently concluded TPP; envisages that the outcome of the negotiations can act as a template for future free trade agreements;
  5. Calls on the Commission to study in depth all additional market access opportunities for European economic operators, especially SMEs, offered by the possible FTAs with Australia and New Zealand during the scoping exercise and to weigh these against any possible defensive interests, given that both Australia and New Zealand have already comparatively open markets and very low tariffs in international comparison;
  6. Stresses that ambitious agreements between the three advanced economies must address, in a meaningful way, investment, trade in goods and services (drawing on recent European Parliament recommendations as regards policy space reservations and sensitive sectors), e-commerce, public procurement, energy, state-owned enterprises, competition, anti-corruption, regulatory issues such as sanitary and phytosanitary barriers, technology research and, especially, the needs of SMEs, and can benefit governance of the global economy through intensified convergence and cooperation on international standards without lowering any consumer (e.g. food safety), environmental (e.g. animal health and welfare, plant health) or social and labour protection levels;
  7. Emphasises that the possible agreements should fully take into account, in a separate chapter, the needs and interests of SMEs with regard to market access facilitation issues

in order to generate concrete business opportunities;

8. Considers that a robust and ambitious sustainable development chapter, covering, among other things, core labour standards, the four ILO priority governance conventions and multilateral environmental agreements, is an indispensable part of any potential free trade agreement;
9. Notes that agriculture is a very sensitive sector and that a final, balanced outcome in the agriculture and fisheries chapters must give due consideration to the interests of all European producers, e.g. meat, dairy, sugar, cereal and, textile producers and those in the outermost regions, for instance by introducing transitional periods or appropriate quotas or not making any commitments in the most sensitive sectors; considers that only then can it boost competitiveness and be beneficial to both consumers and producers; calls for the inclusion of effective bilateral safeguard measures to prevent a surge in imports that would cause, or threaten to cause, serious injury to European producers in sensitive sectors and for the implementation of specific measures to protect sensitive products from the outermost regions, in particular the exclusion of special sugars;
10. Stresses that the negotiations must result in strong and enforceable provisions covering the recognition and protection of intellectual property rights, including geographical indications (GIs);
11. Calls on the Commission to conduct as soon as possible comprehensive sustainability impact assessments of the potential agreements with a view to being able to thoroughly evaluate possible gains and losses from the enhancement of the EU-Australia and EU-New Zealand trade and investment relationships for the benefit of the population and businesses on both sides, including the outermost regions and the overseas countries and territories;
12. Calls on the Commission to make the launch of negotiations with Australia and New Zealand conditional on all parties committing at the outset to conduct negotiations as transparently as possible and fully respecting best practice as established in other negotiations and through constant dialogue with the social partners and civil society, and to include the expected level of ambition in this regard in the scoping exercise;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the governments and parliaments of Australia and New Zealand.