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DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on Development

for the Committee on International Trade

on a new forward-looking and innovative future strategy on trade and investment
(2015/2105(INI))

Rapporteur: Jan Zahradil

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on International Trade, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Emphasises that open trade is an engine for growth, development and wealth creation; recalls that the countries most integrated into the world economy are also among the richest;
2. Stresses that the importance of the potential contribution of trade policy to sustainable development was recently reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; recalls that the Sustainable Development Goals include several trade-related targets across a number of policy areas;
3. Welcomes the advances made at the World Trade Organisation's Ministerial Conference in Nairobi, in particular in the area of agriculture (e.g. the elimination of trade-distorting agriculture export subsidies, and progress on market access for the least developed countries (LDCs));
4. Recognises the increasing diversity among developing countries as regards their integration into the multilateral trade system and the respective benefits thereof; calls for specific regimes for LDCs in particular, whose share of global trade is marginal; welcomes, therefore, the revision of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP);
5. Stresses the crucial role of Aid for Trade (AfT) in trade-related capacity-building, technical assistance, business support policies for SMEs and regional integration; notes, however, that without serious efforts by the countries directly concerned and significant improvements in governance, trade cannot – in isolation – help countries to overcome development constraints;
6. Recalls that Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) are a key development instrument for helping to alleviate poverty in the long run; stresses, however, that their scope is still mainly limited to goods, and that expanding them to services and investment would considerably increase potential for growth;
7. Stresses that corruption is a major non-tariff barrier in developed and developing countries; welcomes the Commission's intention to include ambitious anti-corruption provisions in all future trade agreements.