



## **Joint Statement of the 2nd Meeting of the Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development under the Korea-EU FTA**

11 September 2013, Seoul, Republic of Korea

The Republic of Korea and the EU held the second meeting of the Committee on Trade and Sustainable Development (the Committee) under the Korea-EU Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in Seoul on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2013.

The Committee was co-chaired by Mr Jechul Yoo, Director General of the Bureau of International Cooperation at the Korean Ministry of Environment; and Mr Keunsop Chang, Director of International Cooperation Division at the Korean Ministry of Employment and Labor for Korea, and Monika Hencsey, Head of Unit, Trade and Sustainable Development, Directorate-General for Trade at the European Commission for EU.

Korea and the EU briefed on the work of their respective Domestic Advisory Groups (DAGs). Both sides raised recent work prepared by the DAGs in follow up to the 1<sup>st</sup> Trade and Sustainable Development Committee. The Committee encourages further discussion in this respect between the DAGs and through the civil society forum. Both sides agreed to present the summary of the discussion of the 2nd Trade and Sustainable Development Committee to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Civil Society Forum.

The Committee discussed its interactions with the civil society forum and the respective DAGs and in this respect noted that there is an opportunity to better establish this relationship. In this respect there is a need to work progressively; useful steps might

include a different ordering of the Committee and the civil society forum, and also providing agenda space for DAGs to report to the Committee on specific aspects of the DAGs work. Flexibility will be necessary in this respect to allow for processes to be adapted to specific needs.

Korea and the EU updated each other on their recent respective developments in regard to environment policies, including on climate change, in particular in relation to Emissions Trading Schemes (ETS) and Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) initiatives. The Committee also discussed the issue of liberalisation of environmental goods and the various fora in which this is discussed. In addition, the EU outlined its recent initiatives to combat illegal logging and associated trade, in particular the EU Timber Regulation, and the Korean side responded by updating on its latest developments in this area. The EU side offered to continue to dialogue in respect to trade in timber. Both sides agreed to continue its exchanges in respect of climate change and environmental policies.

Korea and the EU exchanged views on each side's labour policies, including ratification of the ILO conventions and current labour market policies in the aftermath of the recent economic crisis. With regard to the ILO conventions, Korea informed about the recent discussion at the National Assembly on the ratification of ILO fundamental conventions and Domestic Workers Convention (C189), the status of the ratification of Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) and the government's efforts to ratify more ILO conventions.

The EU informed on the progress made by the EU Member States in ratification of other ILO up-to-date conventions, in particular the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). In addition, it provided information concerning proposals to authorise the Member States to ratify the Chemicals Convention (C170) and the Domestic Workers Convention (C189), and on the progress made in the EU concerning Work in Fishing Convention (C188).

Both sides agreed to make continuous efforts towards achieving ratification of ILO conventions and to exchange information in this regard.

In addition, Korea informed about the recent changes in the safety certification program for industrial machinery. The EU outlined its policy in the area of health and safety at work.

In respect to the above, the EU also noted that close cooperation with the ILO has proven instrumental in its Member States efforts in ratification and implementation of ILO conventions and encourages Korea and the ILO to engage in a regular technical dialogue in this respect. Korea informed that Korea and the ILO have been and will be in close cooperation.

For the agenda item of cooperation under Annex 13 of the Agreement, Korea and the EU discussed recent initiatives aiming at implementation of the international guidelines and principles in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

The Korean side informed about the recent initiatives for raising awareness for CSR, such as implementing ISO 26000. The EU side informed about recent initiatives covering the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human rights, as well as recent legislative initiatives related to transparency, as well as to social and environmental aspects in public procurement. Under the agenda point on cooperation, the Committee also discussed possible areas and mechanisms of future cooperation in the area of labour.

Under the ‘any other business’ point, the EU side raised biodiversity and there was a brief exchange of views, including on preparations of the Conference of Parties meeting, which will take place in Korea in 2014. Both sides will look into the possibility of organising a video conference between relevant services in the near future to discuss this issue further.

The Committee noted the organisation of a labour workshop by the civil society forum and looks forward to the DAGs continued work and cooperation on issues such as this, as covered by the Trade and Sustainable Development chapter, including with other key stakeholders as appropriate.

In this respect, the Committee discussed possible areas for follow up work by the DAGs. The EU side proposed that Sustainable Consumption and Production and Corporate Social Responsibility as two possible topics for consideration, this could include the organisation of workshops.

Both sides welcomed the open and constructive discussion at the 2<sup>nd</sup> trade and sustainable development committee concerning trade related environmental and labour policy issues as a good basis for further dialogue. The Committee tentatively agreed to hold their next meeting by the first half of 2015; this may be dependent on the timing of the Trade Committee in order that lines of communication between the Trade and Sustainable Development Committee and the Trade Committee are maintained.