

Procedure file

Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	1997/2301(INI)	Procedure completed
Multilateral commercial relations: the European Union and the developing partner countries of the EU		
Subject 6.20.01 Agreements and relations in the context of the World Trade Organization (WTO)		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	RELA External Economic Relations		22/01/1998
		PSE SMITH Alex	
	Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
	ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs, Industrial Policy		16/02/1998
		PPE SECCHI Carlo	

Key events			
19/12/1997	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
21/04/1999	Vote in committee		Summary
21/04/1999	Committee report tabled for plenary	A4-0221/1999	
04/05/1999	Decision by Parliament	T4-0346/1999	Summary
04/05/1999	End of procedure in Parliament		
01/10/1999	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	1997/2301(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 54
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	RELA/4/09619

Documentation gateway					
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A4-0221/1999 OJ C 279 01.10.1999, p. 0006	21/04/1999	EP	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T4-0346/1999 OJ C 279 01.10.1999, p. 0020-0034	04/05/1999	EP	Summary

Multilateral commercial relations: the European Union and the developing partner countries of the EU

The Committee has adopted the report by Alex SMITH (PES, UK) on world trade and the developing countries. The report looks at the need for convergence and liberalisation of regional and multilateral trade at world level. The biggest challenge is the continuing integration of developing countries into the world economy. The REX Committee believes that the new multilateral trade negotiations (the Millennium Round) provide an opportunity to establish a more sustainable path to trade liberalisation, which would be in the long-term interests of both developed and developing countries, given that the world economy is becoming more and more interdependent.?

Multilateral commercial relations: the European Union and the developing partner countries of the EU

The European Parliament adopted the resolution by Alex Smith (PSE,UK) on multilateral commercial relations: the European Union and the developing partner countries of the European Union. The report strongly supports the EU proposals for all industrialised Members of the WTO to bind their tariffs to 0-duties on "essentially all products" exported by developing countries by the year 2003, and no later than 2005. The Parliament calls on the EU to back its promises to the ACP on flexibility in regional arrangements offered to them. The Council and the Commission are called upon to use the first summit of the Heads of State and Government of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Rio in June 1999, as an opportunity to secure an agreement to encourage the development of trade relations between these regions with a view to achieving greater liberalisation and achieving a free trade area. The Parliament calls on the Council and the Commission to speed up the negotiations under way with Mexico, as well as those with Mercosur and Chile so that they can be completed by 31/12/99. It also calls for the review of the special and differential treatment for developing countries to be linked to a commitment, on their part, to respect for the core ILO labour standards and for increased WTO cooperation with all UN agencies with a competence in areas related to trade and sustainable development. The report calls on all WTO members to ensure that the agenda for new multi-lateral negotiations (end 1999) clearly reflects the ultimate objective of sustainable development to the benefit of all. It calls for an examination of how the WTO could effectively play a part in promoting sustainable development and the taking into account of labour standards and environmental concerns as necessary pre-requisites to this. It calls on EU negotiators to work on the implementation of this "agenda for action" and keep the European Parliament fully briefed throughout the negotiations.?