
PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON THE WTO

Organized jointly by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the European Parliament

Forty-first session of the Steering Committee

24-25 April 2018

European Parliament, Brussels

STATEMENT

As Members of the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO, we reaffirm our commitment to an open and rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, being certain that free and fair trade is among the most powerful engines for growth, supporting millions of jobs and contributing to prosperity;

We consider in this regard that the WTO Appellate Body has a fundamental role in the efficiency of the overall WTO system and in ensuring the respect of WTO rules so as to avoid resorting to unilateral measures, and call on all WTO Members to step up action and unblock ongoing appointment procedures in the Dispute Settlement Body for the vacant posts of the Appellate Body members;

We remind that failure to do so would result, by end of 2018 when there will be four vacant Appellate Body Member posts, in paralysing the work of the Appellate Body which could in turn put in jeopardy the entire enforcement system of the WTO;

We are convinced that at a time when some are questioning multilateral institutions, it is important to restore trust in the WTO by bringing it closer to the citizens and their concerns, such as how trade can play a role in driving women's economic empowerment, and stress that the continued and increased involvement of parliamentarians will be crucial in this regard; we plead therefore in favour of strengthening the institutional cooperation between the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO and the WTO.