



LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SEIMO EUROPOS REIKALŲ KOMITETAS

SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

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LIETUVOS RESPUBLIKOS SEIMO UŽSIENIO REIKALŲ KOMITETAS

SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Dr. E.B. van Apeldoorn
Chair of the Standing Committee on European Affairs
The Senate of the States General

Mr. Malik Azmani
Chair of the Standing Committee on European Affairs
The House of Representatives

Ms Angelien Eijsink
Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs
The House of Representatives

Mr Nico Schrijver
Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs
Defence and Development Cooperation
The Senate of the States General

Dear Colleagues,

We are addressing you on behalf of the members of the Committee on European Affairs and Committee on Foreign Affairs with a hope to continue our parliamentary dialogue and thus to contribute to a stronger and more secure European Union.

The European Union is being shaken by challenges which seem to go beyond the readiness of our policies to adapt. Moreover, we are aware that the future of the EU demands new vigour from every European capital, translated into actions rooted in our common European values and the achievements of the European democratic tradition.

One of the fundamental achievements of the EU is its ability to promote international trade. The Netherlands have a rich and glorious tradition of trade that dates back centuries. The history of the Dutch people has always been the example of respect to private ownership and free trade, the key principle that underpins modern Europe the way it functions now.

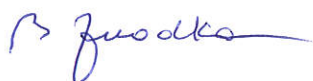
This makes us hope that the Dutch Parliament, while respecting the opinion of those Dutch citizens who expressed their negative stance in the referendum, will still find a way to complete ratification process of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement/Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (AA/DCFTA). In view of the complexity of the situation, we hope that a proper legal solution acceptable for all sides could and should be found.

All the 28 national Parliaments of EU Member States, the Netherlands included, have already ratified the text of the AA/DCFTA. We see the Agreement as serving the interests of both EU Member States and Ukraine. Provisional application of AA/DCFTA since 01 January 2016 has already produced positive results. In the first half of 2016, bilateral trade grew by 11 % in comparison to the same period in 2015 and EU exports to Ukraine have grown by 18 %. Dutch exports to Ukraine have increased by impressive 27 % in January-May 2016 compared to the same period in 2015.

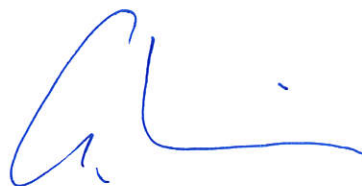
The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement serves as a blueprint for further reform in Ukraine aimed at achieving effective operation of anti-corruption and law enforcement institutions, transparent and open public administration, sound management of public finance and business-friendly regulatory environment that, combined with trade facilitation measures, will further increase and sustain the volumes of bilateral trade.

Today, Ukraine is fighting for Europe, for all of us, and is paying a price for its geopolitical decision to bind its future with the one of our family of nations. This is a dear price: the Southern part of Ukraine (Crimea) is occupied, while the Eastern part (Donbas) faces an ongoing war waged by Russia. The people of Ukraine have made their choice; they know they stand for change, democracy and our common future.

Let Europe send a strong message to Ukraine that is not alone and that we will continue to support Ukraine on its path of reform. Non-ratification of AA/DCFTA would have a detrimental effect on reforms in Ukraine and Ukrainian people. Moreover, it would definitely strike a blow to the EU's credibility we all need so badly in order to manage our common challenges.



Benediktas JUODKA
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Affairs



Gediminas KIRKILAS
Chairman
Committee on European
Affairs