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EU and Mexico complete seventh round of negotiations

EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström and Mexican Secretary of Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo today reflected on the state-of-play after the latest negotiation round for a new trade agreement. This forms part of an updated Global Agreement between the two partners.

The latest set of talks began on 12 December and finished today. Over the course of the round, the teams discussed all areas of the agreement with resulted in very good progress. They managed to finalise the work on a number of issues, including on competition, SMEs, transparency, SPS, good regulatory practices, and trade and sustainable development. The negotiations also covered the revised market access offers for goods, which was exchanged after the sixth round of negotiations.

Nevertheless, despite this important progress there is still a need for further work on a number of issues, related both to market access and rules.

Trade Commissioner **Malmström** said: *"We've made a lot of progress and we are very close to a deal, but we are not there yet. It's in sight but we do need some additional work at the beginning of next year, aiming for a deal that is right, not any deal. As I've said before, quality must come before speed, and this is a goal shared by our Mexican partners. We want a deal that delivers for our companies, for our economies, but also for our citizens. As well as the economic benefits, the agreement is also a way to tie our citizens closer together and to confirm our shared values on sustainable development, labour and environmental rules, human rights and our objectives on climate change. We will also have for the first time a chapter on how to tackle corruption in the public and private sectors – something which is relevant for trade of course. The EU's trade policy is very much about building bridges, not walls. In this work, Mexico is a close friend and ally and a long-standing trading partner. So we will continue our work in the coming weeks towards a final agreement and Secretary Guajardo and I will remain in close contact with each other and with our negotiating teams."*

At the end of the round, the teams agreed to stay in continuous contact and to meet again soon after the winter break, with precise dates to be decided. A more detailed report on the outcome of the round will be published on the DG Trade website in the New Year.

Background

The EU and Mexico launched negotiations to update their trade relations in May 2016.

The trade deal is part of a broader pact – the Global Agreement. This forms the basis of the EU's relationship with Mexico and covers issues of broader shared interest that go beyond trade, including climate change and human rights.

In 1997 Mexico was the first country in Latin America to sign a Global Agreement with the EU. The agreement came into force in 2000.