



Council of Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

The President

Subject : your letter dated 6 July 2016 on PACE participation in the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO

Strasbourg, 12 July 2016

Dear Mr Lange,

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 6 July 2016 which I have shared with the Chairperson of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development as well as with Mr Ögmundur Jónasson.

The Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development appointed Mr Ögmundur Jónasson (Iceland, UEL) the Assembly's representative to this meeting on 21 April 2016. The Committee has a mandate which goes beyond a narrow focus on international trade, and takes a view rooted in the Council of Europe's European Social Charter. It is mandated to defend Council of Europe values in the areas of social and environmental rights, democracy and good governance, also in the context of trade negotiations.

Mr Jónasson's personal criticisms of some elements of EU trade policy should be seen in the light of the overall concerns of the committee. I believe that the elements of concern raised by Mr Jónasson are worth being looked into by the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO in its future work and, in this context, I would encourage even greater co-operation between your Steering Committee and the Assembly's Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development.

I look forward to pursuing the co-operation between the Steering Committee of the Parliamentary Conference on the WTO and our Assembly, and remain,

Yours sincerely

Pedro Agramunt

Mr Bernd Lange, MEP
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