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Taking mutual advantage through sustainable trade and investment policies for agri-food trade should be a substantial part of the EU's upgrade of the Latin America agenda

CELCAA is the European Liaison Committee for Agricultural and Agri-Food Trade and, as such, represents at European level the most essential food sectors such as meat and livestock, dairy, cereals, grain, and oilseed trade, eggs, egg whites, and egg yolks, wine and aromatized wine products, hops, tea, and herbal infusions, tobacco, and the craft butcher sector. We further work with national agricultural organizations and represent, in total, more than 25.000 agri-food producers and traders in Europe.

With the experience of a global pandemic and the tangible impacts of geopolitical conflicts on global agri-food trade, trade openness and diversification have turned from simple catchphrases to an accelerated necessity. The importance of agri-food trade has expanded in this context in two essential dimensions: Firstly, to ensure European and global food affordability and food and nutrition security, for which the highest grade of diversification and a reduced dependence on monopolized outlets are essential. Secondly, in a period of ever-changing climate, only through robust trading structures will we be able to ensure access to markets, inputs, innovation, and the experience of our trading partners, when it comes to transitioning agri-food markets towards new climate robustness. Diversified trade will be essential to counterbalance the impact of vulnerabilities to the food system, caused by trade barriers, extreme weather events, supply chain disruptions, animal diseases, and plant pests.

Latin American and Caribbean countries are important, consistent, and reliable partners for mutual agri-food trade, and as such, CELCAA welcomes the advancement of a new agenda in EU relations with this region of significance. We appreciate that the FTAs with Chile, Mercosur, and Mexico are pioneering with a new view on climate and broader sustainability provisions; these agreements are not only focused on commercial wins but also show a new level of cooperation readiness at the sanitary and phytosanitary level. The Sustainable Food Systems chapter is a further benefit to mutual stocktaking and advancement on key elements such as sustainable pesticide and fertilizer usage as well as animal welfare. In this regard, we anticipate that strong enforcement will result in significant improvements on both sides.

With the conviction, that collaboration and cooperation is key to create trustful and output-oriented relationships, we hope that these agreements lay the foundation for a broader scope for trade cooperation in the new Latin America strategy. With that regard, the future agenda should push for stronger cooperation on sustainable agri-food trade and investment policies with a positive and enabling agenda.
