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**MARKET ACCESS SEMINAR  
'TOWARDS 2020: FACING THE CHALLENGES OF A NEW ERA'****CEO HEADQUARTERS  
1 JUNE 2010****STRENGTHENING THE MARKET ACCESS STRATEGY****SPEAKING POINTS OF WINAND L.E. QUAEVLIEG, VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF BUSINESSEUROPE*****What is the role of the MAS in the new EU trade policy strategy?***

To determine the role of the Market Access Strategy MAS in the new trade policy strategy of the EU, it is important to examine the global environment of the EU trade policy. Compared to the environment at the time of the publication of the previous EU trade policy strategy in 2006, 'Global Europe: Competing in the World', there are at least 7 important new factors: the economic crisis and protectionist pressures; a series of worldwide challenges; stagnant WTO-DDA negotiations; very dynamic developments in the field of FTA's; the increasing importance of non tariff barriers; substantial new trade policy competences of the European Parliament; and the establishment of a new European External Action Service EEAS.

Although these seven factors have major implications, the central aim of the EU trade policy should remain unchanged: it must promote the international competitiveness of the EU in the globalising economy in order to maintain the position of the EU in the world and preserve the European economic model. To that end, an organic linkage between internal and external policies of the EU should be created and optimal co-ordination between the various EU institutions and services should become the standard. The economic dimension of the EU External Action must gain weight.

The MAS is only one instrument amid a whole range of trade policy instruments: multilateral and bilateral negotiations, management of existing trade agreements, TDI, TBR.

In the relation between the MAS and the seven abovementioned factors, the following aspects are relevant.

1. The economic crisis and protectionist pressures.

The rise of protectionist pressures should not be underestimated. Although a protectionist watershed comparable to the nineteen-thirties has been avoided, in the meantime a solid body of several hundred protectionist measures worldwide is in place. Should social pressures rise further, political knees may weaken. Monitoring protectionism in the world is therefore essential. The MAS has played a very valuable role in this field in 2009 and this should continue. But of course monitoring is not the ultimate aim; the aim is removal of barriers.

2. A series of worldwide challenges

Governments and business worldwide are confronted with a series of common challenges: apart from the economic and financial crisis these are: insecurity, climate change and environmental degradation, scarcity of energy, water, food and raw materials. All these challenges have an important political dimension. Open markets, as promoted by the MAS, can contribute to the mastering of these challenges.

3. Stagnant WTO-DDA negotiations.

The stagnation of the WTO-DDA, that unfortunately is expected to last at least until the end of 2010, implies that no new rules for the liberalisation of international trade will be agreed. This increases the importance of the enforcement of existing rules and agreements. The continuation of the identification, publication (in the Market Access Data Base) and removal of key barriers is therefore essential. This is the essence of the MAS. BUSINESSEUROPE considers key barriers to be the economically most relevant issues in the most relevant countries; the EU should not be deterred to tackle barriers because they are complicated and difficult to challenge from a legal perspective.

4. Very dynamic developments in the field of FTA's.

The EU has concluded FTA negotiations, is negotiating or is planning to negotiate FTA's with a large group of countries and regions spread all over the six continents. But liberalisation of trade is not in place once negotiations are successfully concluded. In fact the work often thus begins then and painstaking hard work lies ahead. A good example is the FTA EU Korea, where BUSINESSEUROPE insists on a strong focus on the implementation and monitoring of the provisions of the agreement. To this end, the methods and experience of the MAS (Market Access Advisory Committee, Market Access Partnerships and Market Access Working Groups) may be particularly relevant to secure results. Thus the conclusion of FTA's may demand more MAS activity, not less.

5. The increasing importance of Non Tariff Barriers.

The increasing importance of Non Tariff Barriers has been convincingly illustrated by the other speakers today: Mr Alain Berger (Alstom) for public procurement, Mr Kaunistola (Nokia) for technical standards and services, and Mr Torbol (Amadeus) for services licenses. The MAS is especially well suited to tackle non-tariff barriers, as is shown a.o in the excellent annual report 2009 on the MAS.



6. Substantial new trade policy competences for the European Parliament  
With the entry into force of the new EU Treaties, the European Parliament has become a key player in EU trade policy. The MAS policy of the Commission and the results thereof will also come under the scrutiny of the EP and the pressure to show results will increase. But the EP can also reinforce the effect of the MAS by becoming a partner and a player in the EU effort and by raising trade items in the bilateral dialogue with the parliaments and authorities of the EU's trade partners. This is once more an argument for a far more active lobby of business towards the EP in the field of trade policy.

7. The establishment of a new European External Action Service  
The EEAS is in the process of being established right now. Organising and managing Market Access Partnerships certainly must be an essential element of the tasks of the EEAS.

The conclusion of these seven points can only be that the MAS is rightfully at the heart of EU trade policy, that it can be of great value to business, that it should be further developed as a key instrument of trade policy, and that to that end a well defined strategic approach is needed.

*How can industry participate in the MAS? Is the partnership developed to its full extent?*

The MAS is a strategy in development, it can be continuously improved on the basis of the experience gained and the lessons learned. BUSINESSEUROPE has provided comments on the MAS in the past, a.o. on focusing and prioritizing, that have been taken into account by the Commission. BUSINESSEUROPE and individual sectors and businesses participate in the signalling of barriers, the work of the Market Access Partnerships, the Market Access Working Groups and the Market Access Advisory Committee.

Industry's first impression of the process in the MAAC and the Working Groups is positive. Thus in the Chemicals Working Group, 40 barriers have been identified and 15 selected for action. The possibility to raise issues directly with the Commission and Member States is appreciated. But of course the ultimate test remains whether the barriers will in the end be removed. BUSINESSEUROPE and individual businesses will continue to be involved in the MAS work.

To improve further the MAS the following suggestions can be made:

- to create new additional MAS working groups for pharmaceuticals and footwear
- to establish a one stop business contact point in every EU Delegation; this is especially useful to SME's
- raise the awareness in the EU Delegations that they are also the representative of European business interests, just as the Embassies of the Member States are
- involve business more in Commission visits to third countries
- increase the co-ordination with other trade partners in tackling barriers



- focus MAS more on strategic trade issues such as public procurement, services, IPR and raw materials.

To tailor the MAS more to the needs of SME's the MAS annual report 2009 contains a number of useful suggestions: no separate rules should be established for SME's, but tailor-made support is needed, access to information is key, databases should be linked, and a one stop shop should be created.

### *What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the MAS?*

The MAS is a strength born out of weakness. Intricate and politically sensitive trade problems cannot be solved by business alone, by the Commission alone or by Member States alone. They all lack the necessary resources. It is only the combination of the strengths of each partner that can create a strong and effective MAS. In that sense, the MAS is a very modern instrument of public private co-operation. But it can only work provided genuine co-operation takes place and every partner considers itself owner of the effort.

The main weakness of the MAS at this moment probably is that it is relatively unknown. This requires action by business, the Member States and the Commission. That is why the Spanish Presidency of the EU and CEOE should be congratulated with the initiative of this seminar. But when the MAS will become more known and more demand will rise, the EU should be prepared to have enough resources available.

The users of the MAS should however also be aware of the limitations of the MAS. Some trade barriers are particularly complex and sensitive. Removing them will demand a lot of effort and will take time. Therefore it is essential to manage expectations well.

And some issues continue to demand the global approach for an effective solution. That is why a successful conclusion of the WTO-DDA must remain the ultimate aim in trade policy.

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