



Mr Karel De Gucht
European Commission
200, Rue de la Loi,
B-1049 Brussels
BELGIUM

30 May 2012

Dear Commissioner,

I am writing to express my concern over the restriction of trade at the EU border with the Eurasian Customs Union (Russia-Kazakhstan-Belarus) due to the new rules of inspection of foreign road transport carriers within the Customs Union. These measures will undermine trade and harm both EU and Russian companies in their trade partnerships.

Russian authorities are currently applying an origin based regulation (reference invoice) for the transport of goods into the Customs Union thereby requiring EU trucking companies based in countries like Lithuania, Latvia or Poland to obtain third country permits to transport goods into the territory if those goods originate from other EU member states.. The new regulation creates serious challenges for EU trade as there are too few third country licences to meet the growing demand and trucking companies face huge fines if they do not comply with the new rules. This will significantly increase the cost of trading with the Customs Union and may eliminate EU trucking companies from this road freight transport market.

We consider this new regulation to be incompatible with the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR Convention) which stipulates that CMR notes are the only required transport document. In addition, this measure is clearly a violation of Russia's GATS obligations and potentially a restriction to trade under GATT.

We kindly request that you urgently take this matter up with the Russian authorities. This letter has also been sent to Commissioner Kallas.

Yours sincerely,

Philippe de Buck