



Mr. Roberto Azevêdo
Director General
World Trade Organisation
Rue de Lausanne 154,
1202 Genève,
SWITZERLAND

13 July 2020

Dear Director General,

BusinessEurope is a firm believer in multilateral trade and the key role of the WTO, as the keeper of the rules. We also support the current reform efforts that aim to bring the Organisation to the 21st century, making it more efficient for its users and better able to tackle the rising protectionist tendencies, through modern rules and an effective dispute settlement system.

In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to an issue that is raising significant concerns in the European business community. I am referring to the Airbus-Boeing case and the delay we experience in the delivery of the decision on the award on Boeing subsidies, which will determine the compensation the EU is entitled to be offered by the United States.

Although we understand that the conditions related to the COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted the process, we would like to stress that the cases relating to Airbus and Boeing have always run in parallel, thus ensuring that the parties exercise their rights without allowing for escalation in the trade dispute. As the United States, in the context of their case against the EU, has already been able to adopt additional duties on a number of EU products since October 2019, the significant delay in the delivery of the decision against the United States is creating problems for European businesses, which are severely hit. It is also important to highlight that without a decision confirmed by the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body, it will not be possible for the EU and the United States to find a negotiated solution – which is the preferred solution.

Therefore, we call on the WTO to ensure there will be no further delays in the case of Boeing subsidies and that a decision is taken soon. This is an issue of legitimacy for the WTO, especially at this time of crisis and the on-going reform process.

You came at the driving seat of the WTO at the most challenging time in its 25-year history. Despite the numerous challenges, we have seen positive developments that confirm the WTO's relevance and centrality in the multilateral trading system. The efficient settlement of disputes is among the most relevant features of the WTO and of critical importance for the business community. I trust you will ensure this dispute will not be an exception.

I thank you for your attention and would be happy to engage with you further on this important issue.

Yours sincerely,


Markus J. Beyrer