News | 29.09.2014

New Trade Commissioner?

Yannick Jadot on Trade Commissioner nominee Cecilia Malmstrom

What is your overall impression of how the candidate performed?

Cecilia Malmström was obviously well briefed on the trade dossier. Unfortunately, she has fallen completely into the line and footsteps of her predecessor, Karel de Gucht.

Were there particular issues or answers that stood out – either in a positive or negative sense?

In dramatic fashion, Ms Malmström took a 180 degree turn on the ISDS issue. While in her initial written responses to questions from members she revived the spirit of Juncker's answers to the EP, namely opposition to Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) devices, during her testimony today she had a positive view that would be an unacceptable setback for democracy. She also failed to respond to our request to include binding chapters on "sustainable development" in free trade agreements or to integrate the precautionary principle into texts. Finally, if she rejects outright a possible cooperation with the American administration on European regulations for the protection of private data, she did not give a precise answer. Ms. Malstrom displays an unshakable faith in the absolute virtues of free trade. Her commitments to greater transparency though were not concrete or specific and in general the manner of her answers remained disconnected from from the actual questions and the concerns of European citizens faced with a headlong rush towards globalisation and the dilution of the European project. Clearly, she has decided to defend the controversial record of the outgoing Commission rather than choosing a more balanced path.

Do you think she is suitable for the portfolio for which she has been proposed?

Ms Malmström has demonstrated her commitment and competence these last years. Her neo-liberal fibre promises heated, but I hope also constructive, debate with the Greens.

Out of ten, what marks would you give her hearing performance?

4/10 - She recited briefings from the EU Commission's directorate general for trade too frequently and did not open any new perspective on trade policy.

- Greens/EFA Members on the Trade Committee (INTA)

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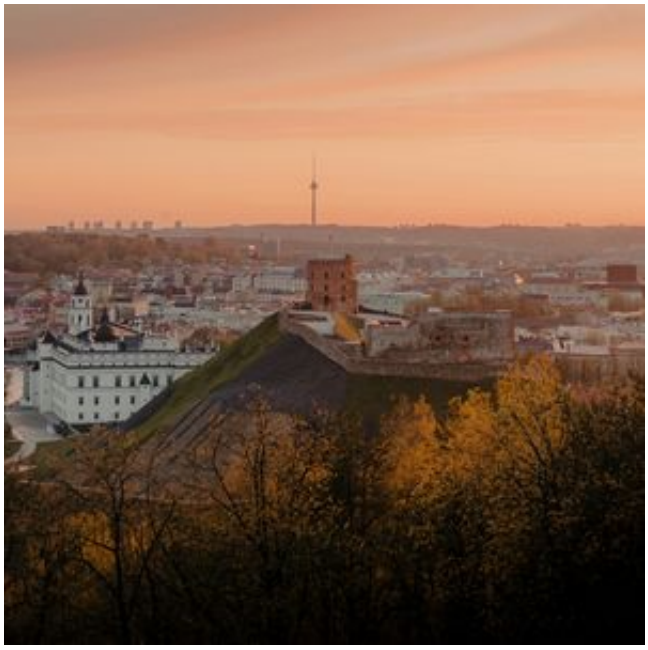
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