



EUROPE INDIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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EICC-2021

Brussels, 20 October 2021

TO:

Mr. Piyush Goyal

Union Minister for Commerce & Industry

Government of India

New Delhi

Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis

Executive Vice President and EU Commissioner for Trade

European Commission

Brussels

Dear Honourable Minister Mr. Goyal,

Dear Honourable Executive Vice-President Mr. Dombrovskis,

Re: Legal Services Sector in the India - EU free trade negotiation

We are glad that both India and the European Union are intensifying efforts to relaunch the stalled free trade negotiations. In the post COVID-19 world order, this is a significant development, not only from an international trade perspective, but also from the geo-politics perspective. For India, FTA with the EU has the potential of integrating it with the dominant global value chain of trade, and for the EU, FTA with India would not only provide an enhanced access to one of the largest and fastest growing markets as well as manufacturing hubs in the world and ensuring supply chain resilience but would also enhance its economic and political influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

We strongly support the negotiation process, while recognizing the need to consolidate and streamline sectoral issues in the FTAs. We firmly believe that both India and the EU stand to gain heavily from a free trade agreement as both parties believe that sustainable development and economic progress is possible only through international cooperation and multilateralism. We are of the view that in the negotiation, EU and India need approach that encompasses their aspirations and that can help fulfil their objectives.

As trade in services have grown exponentially in the last years and as legal sector has been a protected sector in India as well as in the EU, it is important that they should become more relevant in the current trade policy liberalisation agenda of the EU and India. We are aware that legal services sector is a crucial element in the current negotiations for a Free Trade

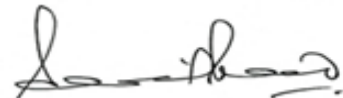
Agreement and we believe that liberalisation of this sector in India will ensure reciprocal response from the EU.

The legal services, which form a vital part of the infrastructure that underpins world commerce, have been experiencing continuous growth both in India and in Europe. This sector can become an important player in achieving and ensuring EU-India economic activities and can be a key in creating the conditions for economic globalisation. There is also a strong interplay between foreign direct investment (FDI) and trade when it comes to India and the EU and therefore this sector can help in creating the structures of the global markets through programmes of privatisation. The scope of liberalisation of legal services in the FTA is thus very important and without successful conclusion of this issue in the FTA, it will defeat the spirit of free trade between EU and India.

With the above in mind, we have enclosed our Chamber's Position Paper exclusively prepared for the free trade negotiations. This Paper speaks about the importance of liberalisation of legal services market and it goes without saying that any agreement on the opening of the of this sector will have reciprocal understanding from both sides.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



Secretary General

Enclosed: As above