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2020

Brainstorming Workshop

“TRADE DEFENCE INSTRUMENTS FOR SERVICES OR ENFORCEMENT OF STATE AID REGULATIONS TO ALL NON-EU STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES ?”

Monday 17 February 2020

The Hotel. - Brussels

Welcome

Alan Lievens
EuDA Chairman

Workshop's Overview

Paris Sansoglou
EuDA Secretary General, Moderator

Opening Address

Karel De Gucht
Former European Commissioner for Trade
Belgian Minister of State and
President of the VUB Institute for European Studies

Presentations

Frank Hoffmeister
European Commission – DG TRADE
Head of Unit H3 on Trade Defence Investigations II. Anti-circumvention

Bojana Dohms
European Commission – DG COMP
Case Handling Assistant in Unit E3 on State aid: Industrial restructuring

INTRODUCTION

Public procurement accounts for 15-20% of global GDP and represents a substantial portion of the EU economy and of many other economies around the world.

Transport infrastructures, including waterborne infrastructures represent a significant portion of EU public procurement. The Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), for instance, which is a key EU funding instrument for investing in infrastructures, has allocated €23.7 billion out of €30.4 billion for Transport infrastructures.

Europe is faced with unfair trade practices distorting competition in its own public procurement market and outside its territory. In Europe, the main competition distortions from third countries stem from the unchallenged access of their EU State Aid non-compliant State-owned Enterprises (SoEs) to European public procurement markets. Outside Europe, there is more and more evidence that the unfair tied financing practices by SoEs from third countries, especially from China, are closing down dredging markets around the world and getting closer to Europe.

In the context of the new European Commission’s top priority: the “Green Deal”, the future of European sustainable public procurement is at stake and depends on setting the right framework and set of requirements that will award tenders or funding only to companies that respect and apply the same European (environmental, social and economic) values, ethics and rules.

Europe needs to tackle its internal competition issues and for instance consider applying the same competition rules, including State Aid Regulations, to all companies active in Europe. Moreover, in both WTO and EU law, there are no effective trade defence instruments, such as dumping and illegal subsidies against unfair trade practices in trade in services. To fill this gap, Europe should consider applying to the services a Trade Defence Instruments procedure, currently only applicable to goods.

As Europe is the largest donor in the world, its development financing and aid, inside and outside Europe, should be granted to companies complying with a minimum set of European rules, ethics and values.

In this context, the workshop will gather experts from the Commission and the industry to reflect on the following possible way forward: develop Trade Defence Instruments for Services or enforce State Aid Regulations to non-EU State owned enterprises ? Looking at the current procedures, how can they be adapted to tackle these competition issues and what are the challenges ahead ?

PROGRAMME

10.30 *Registration & welcome coffee*

11.00 Statement of Compliance with Competition Law

This is a EuDA meeting and it will be held in compliance with all relevant (competition) laws. EuDA is fully committed to ensuring its compliance with all laws and expects nothing less than strict adherence to competition laws during its meetings.

11.00 Welcome and Programme Overview

by Alan Lievens, EuDA Chairman and Paris Sansoglou, EuDA Secretary General

11.05 Opening Address

by Karel De Gucht, former Commissioner for Trade

11.20 Presentations

Trade Defence Instruments for goods and challenges for Services

by Frank Hoffmeister, DG TRADE Head of Unit H3 on Trade defence Investigations II. Anti-circumvention

Q&A

State Aid Regulations and challenges for implementation to non-EU SoEs

by Bojana Dohms, DG COMP Unit E3 on State aid: Industrial restructuring
Q&A

12.00 Discussions

European Commission

with representatives from DG CLIMA C3, DG COMP A2 and COMP A5, DG GROW A4 and G1 (tbc), with representatives from MOVE D1 and D2, DG TRADE B1.

Industry Representatives

representatives from EuDA, EIC, FIEC, ESPO, ECSA, SEA Europe.

12.25 Wrap-up and conclusions

by Paris Sansoglou, EuDA Secretary General

12.30 *Closing & Lunch*

ORGANISING ASSOCIATION

EuDA

Having celebrated its 25th Anniversary in 2018, the European Dredging Association (“**EuDA**”) was founded in 1993 as a non-profit industry organisation for European dredging companies and related organisations to interface with the various European Union’s (“**EU**”) Institutions and also some International Organizations (such as IMO, HELCOM or ILO). EuDA members employ approximately 25,000 European employees directly “on land and on board of the vessels” and more than 48,300 people indirectly (through the suppliers and services companies). The combined fleet of EuDA’s members counts approximately 750 seaworthy EU-flagged vessels.

Dredging activities are not well known by the wider public, but as a matter of fact, the European dredging companies, members of EuDA, are world market leaders with about 80% share of the worldwide open dredging market and a turnover of 8.6bn Euro in 2018. Although 70% of operations take place outside Europe, 90% of the returns flow back to Europe.

The Association assists its members with all kinds of requests related to dredging issues, presently strongly focusing on Social, Environmental, Technical and Trade issues. These issues are coordinated by the Secretariat and executed by its specialised working groups composed of experts from the member companies.

EuDA has registered as Interest Representative Nr 2492574893-58 under the EU transparency register. The Association will pursue its goals by endorsing policies to create fair and equitable conditions for competition; commits to respecting applicable national, European and international rules and regulations; commits to operating its fleet safely, effectively and responsibly (for more info [click here](#)).