**Joint Statement**

**EU-Thailand FTA negotiations, 1st round, Brussels 27-31 May 2013**

The first round of the EU-Thailand negotiations on a comprehensive free trade agreement (FTA) was held from 27-31 May in Brussels. The launch of FTA negotiations marks an important step in strengthening EU-Thailand trade relations with enormous potential for both sides. The ambition is to conclude a comprehensive FTA.

On the EU side, the delegation was chaired by Deputy Director-General Joao Aguiar Machado, European Commission, Directorate-General for Trade, and on the Thai side by Dr Olarn Chaipravat, President of Thailand Trade Representative Office. Both Chief Negotiators reiterated the commitment to conclude a comprehensive FTA.

During the round, negotiation teams discussed a wide range of areas including goods, rules of origin, services and investment, public procurement, competition, intellectual property, trade remedies and trade and sustainable development.

The round helped gain a better understanding of respective positions and systems in the different areas subject to negotiations. In some areas, text-based discussions started during the round. The talks took place in a very cordial atmosphere.

The next round of negotiations will be held in Thailand from 16-20 September 2013.

The negotiations were officially launched on 6 March 2013 by President Barroso, European Commission President, and the Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra. The EU is Thailand's third largest trading partner and the Thailand is the EU's third largest trading partner inside ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations). Trade between the EU and Thailand reached nearly €32 billion in 2012. The EU is one of the largest foreign investors in Thailand.

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