EU – Switzerland relations: call for de-escalation

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Zurich, Switzerland, on 28 June 2019:

Recalls:

- the positive overall results achieved on the institutional framework agreement between the Swiss Confederation and the European Union after 4 years of formal negotiations;
- the Swiss Confederation's reluctance to initial the treaty before clarifications can be reached on provisions relating to wage and worker protection, state subsidies and citizens' rights, the three of which were deemed still too controversial after a national public consultation;
- the European Commission's refusal to grant Swiss stock exchanges "equivalent third country" status beyond the end of June 2019 and the envisaged retaliation that would ban Swiss shares from being traded in the EU.

Emphasises:

- that Switzerland is the EU's third trading partner and that the EU is Switzerland's main trading partner;
- that Switzerland and the EU enjoy close, broad and comprehensive relations, and that economic, political, social, scientific and people-to-people ties and links are strong, recalling the unique cultural and geographical proximity between the two.

Assumes:

- that the EU Commission as chief negotiator and all EU Member States take into consideration that any agreement is with the proviso that the Swiss electorate has to approve the framework agreement by referendum and that therefore all European and Swiss stakeholders involved refrain from any form of escalation.

Supports:

- FDP Switzerland's longstanding, constructive stance and leadership, both in government and parliament, to defend and develop good relationships with the European Union along the "bilateral path";
- FDP Switzerland and all other actors in Switzerland in their political fight against the populism of both national-conservative isolationists and a dogmatic and purblind left.

Welcomes:

- the positive conclusion reached by the LXI COSAC regarding the institutional framework agreement.

Calls for:

- a consensual and deescalating approach by all parties involved;
- a swift and considered clarification of open questions, allowing the process of ratification and public deliberation in Switzerland to progress successfully;
- the Swiss left and the trade unions to assume their responsibility to preserve the basis of almost 1 Mio jobs and future growth in Switzerland.

Sources:

[1] LXI COSAC = Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union, 23-25 June 2019, Bucharest. http://www.cosac.eu/61-romania-2019/lxi-cosac-23-25-june-2019-bucharest/

[2] https://www.ft.com/content/25669c8e-9712-11e9-8cfb-30c211dcd229

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