



17 December 2020

Dr Riina Konka
EU Ambassador to South Africa
SOUTH AFRICA

By email: Delegation-S-Africa@eeas.europa.eu

Your Excellency,

I hope you and your delegation are all safe and healthy despite the COVID-19 pandemic raging through the world and wreaking such terrible damage, as it is in South Africa.

FairPlay is concerned at news media reports, in South Africa and internationally, indicating that the EU is deliberately delaying measures that would facilitate the export of South African horses in order to pressure South Africa into approving some additional EU exports of chicken to South Africa. I refer to reports in the [Citizen](#) and [Business Maverick](#) in South Africa, and on the thoroughbrednews.com website in Australia.

If these reports are true, it would be a flagrant abuse of EU trading power and would mean that the EU is bullying smaller nations in order to achieve its own ends. It would also mean the EU is using issues in one industry to try to force a country with which it has a trade agreement to make concessions regarding another industry. This would be both immoral and completely irrational. Immoral because it would destroy jobs and livelihoods of poor people in rural areas and the lowest paid workers. Irrational, in light of the enormous developmental efforts and policy of the EU in South Africa and Africa. On the face of it, such action would undermine economic growth and development and promote poverty in South Africa.

There are two issues here. The first is whether the EU is seeking to force some change in South African poultry policy or regulations by putting pressure on the equine industry. The second is what issues, if any, the EU has with South African policy, regulations, or actions regarding EU poultry exports to South Africa.

The matter has been raised in public and deserves to be clarified in public. To this end, I put the following questions to you as EU ambassador to South Africa:

Quid pro quo between horses and chickens

1. Is it true that the EU is deliberately harming the South African equine industry in order to press for changes regarding EU poultry exports to South Africa?
2. Why is this delay not a breach of the 2016 Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and SADC countries, including South Africa, in which the EU is committed to promote the economic development of these countries?
3. How can such an outrageous demand be justified in terms of the EPA?
4. Why is it not a contravention of the EU's Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) legislation which bans actions that may undermine the development of partner countries?
5. Has any official of the EU informally or formally said to any South African government official that there has to be a quid pro quo between South African horse exports and EU chicken exports? If so, what demands were made and what was the response?



6. Has any official of the EU said to any official at the South African Equine Health & Protocols that they will not get equine exports until there is some change regarding EU chicken exports to South Africa? If so, what demands were made and what was the response?
7. If the EU denies any or all of the allegations being made against it in this regard, why has it not furnished rebuttals to news media outlets that have carried these reports?
8. Is it not true that following a meeting on December 17th of last year between the EU and the South African Department of Agriculture's director of animal health , Dr Mpho Maja and Niki Kruger Chief Director of trade negotiations for the International Trade Division that an agreed statement was issued to the media confirming that an ***audit of the country's export protocols was to take place in April or May of 2020*** and that ***pre-audit questionnaires would be sent out early this year?***
9. Have these pre-audit questionnaires been sent out? If not why not, given that there was a commitment to do so? If they have been sent out, what is the reason for the delay in agreeing a date for the audit, given that the matter is even more urgent than usual, given the economic and jobs ravages of COVID-19?

EU chicken exports to South Africa

10. Has the EU encountered problems with South African officials or policies regarding the lifting of export bans following widespread outbreaks of avian influenza in the EU?
11. If so, what were these complaints, when were they raised and what was the South African response?
12. Does the EU have serious unresolved complaints regarding South Africa's imposition and lifting of avian influenza-based export bans on EU chicken products?
13. If so, are these the issues that are being used to pressure the South African equine industry?
14. If there are poultry issues, why are these not taken up directly with South African government officials instead of some underhand demands being made of another industry?
15. Where does the EU seek to increase its chicken exports to South Africa? In September 2020, official statistics showed that only four countries – Ireland, Spain, Denmark and the Netherlands – exported more than 1 tonne of chicken to South Africa. Numerous EU countries are prohibited from exporting to South Africa because of new avian influenza outbreaks. Does the EU dispute any of these bans?
16. Why would South Africa be so important for EU chicken exports that you are prepared to fight dirty, given that the SA poultry industry – according to independent studies – is much more competitive than that of the EU?
17. How does the EU limit poultry imports into its home market below 10% for so many years?

I look forward to your response, which will be published on the FairPlay website and wish you peace and health over the Christmas season and for 2021.

Yours respectfully

FRANCOIS BAIRD,
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