

## **4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Brazilin-Slovak Chamber of Commerce (BSCC)**

### **Minutes of Meeting**

The 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Brazilin-Slovak Chamber of Commerce (BSCC) was held on 06 November 2019. The event was organized at the Radisson Blu Carlton Hotel in Bratislava and had 17 participants. The list of participants is presented below:

#### **BSCC MEMBERS**

Mr. Milan Cigán – President of the BSCC  
Aliter Technologies - Mr. Ervin Haramia  
Danube Capital Advisors - Mr. Peter Falis and Ms. Jana Maričáková  
Eurocoffee – Mr. Oldrich Holis and Mrs. Andrea Lopatka  
Eskada - Mr. Daniel Sajtak and Ms. Mariana Pažinková  
Embassy of Brazil – H.E. Mr. Luis Balduino, Mr. Ricardo Ayrosa, Mr. Rafael Alonso, Ms. Andrea Simančíková  
FM Logistic - Mr. Peter Ivančík

#### **BSCC GUESTS**

European Commission – Mr. Radim Dvořák  
Slovak Business Agency – Ms. Magdaléna Čisárová  
Chamber of Commerce Trnava / Eurobrew - Mr. Juraj Cajko  
Innovatrics – Mr. Stanislav Lencz

2. The first item on the agenda was an overview of the European Union-Mercosur Agreement, which had its negotiations concluded in June 2019 after almost 20 years of talks. Mr. Radim Dvořák, Deputy Head of the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia explained that, once in force, the agreement will be four times bigger than the EU-Japan Agreement and eight times bigger than the EU-Canada Agreement in terms of tariffs saving. The EU-Mercosur Agreement is a modern arrangement that sets the trends for the future regarding such kind of international instruments and, besides trade liberalization, includes provisions on trade in services, procurement and geographical indications (such as the Tokaj wine). Brazil represents 74% of the EU trade in goods with Mercosur and 71% of the trade in services. The agreement is expected to be highly beneficial for Slovakia, especially in sectors like machinery, chemical industry, automotive (all of which currently facing significant tariffs) and also in several agriculture segments. It upholds food safety and requires that all food products imported into the EU comply with the community's own standards. The agreement should boost small and medium enterprises, which are responsible for most of the current trade between the two blocs. It also promotes environment protection and sustainable development and requires from its members to remain parties to the Paris Agreement on climate. The European Union is the first big partner to close a deal with Mercosur, which gives the former a “first mover” advantage. The agreement will now undergo legal and linguistic technical revision and then be submitted to the Council and European Parliament consent (from the European side) before coming into force.

3. Many BSCC members made questions and comments about the agreement. Mr. Dvořák informed that the objective of the agreement will not be affected by Brexit. He believes the agreement may take up to six years to be fully implemented. The Ambassador of Brazil, Mr. Luis Balduino, recalled a discussion session about the agreement held at the Representation of the European Commission in Bratislava in October 2019, between the European Chief-Negotiator, Ms. Sandra Gallina, and the Slovak Minister of Agriculture, Ms. Gabriela Matečná, during which the Minister's concerns were fully addressed by the Commission.

4. Ambassador Balduino underlined that the reforms underway in Brazil (on pensions, taxes, privatization, economic freedom and currency exchange) are all meant to improve the business environment and increase the role of the private sector in the economic development. He presented an overview of the Brazilian main economic indicators, highlighting that the Credit Default Swap index has reached this week its lowest level in six years, which confirms the market confidence in the Brazilian economy.

5. Ms. Magdaléna Čisárová, from the Slovak Business Agency (SBA), presented the services provided by SBA for free in order to support Slovak SMEs. SBA's National Business Centre organizes educational events about exporting or importing and would be available to prepare for BSCC members this kind of event as well. SBA also supports start-ups (for example, they can select a conference in Brazil and apply for air tickets and fees to be paid by SBA, until March 2020) and has a microloan programme. SBA can also organize events for BSCC members ("Doing business in Brazil", for example).

6. Mr. Rafael Alonso, Head of the Trade and Economic Sector of the Embassy of Brazil, mentioned the recent activities that have been carried out by BSCC. In April, BSCC was one of the organizers of a seminar on Brazil-Slovakia business relations, in cooperation with the Bratislava Regional Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SOPK), when President Cigán spoke to around 25 businesspeople. In October, BSCC set up a stand at the Slovak Business Agency "biznisNET" Open Day and President Cigán spoke to a public of 40 businesspeople during the seminar session. BSCC was a media partner of the e-commerce conference Upterland, in October, and members were offered free tickets. Some BSCC members were sponsors of the Brazilian cultural festival "Brazilslava" and had their promotional material exposed at the multiple events, from film screenings to art exhibitions and concerts. All BSCC members were invited to the events, including the highlight of the festival, the Ensemble BIS concert, which took place on October 1<sup>st</sup> at Primatial Palace. Mr. Alonso also informed the members that BSCC official website and e-mail address have recently been launched and invited members to send suggestions of news articles and events to be promoted on the webpage and the newsletter. He noted that BSCC newsletters now also have a printed version for distribution and a fresh edition should be ready soon. Members and other guests made questions and comments about the activities of the Chamber, regarding how members should

engage in the BSCC's activities; the high environmental standards in Brazilian coffee production; and a possible trade mission from Brazil to Slovakia.

7. President Cigáň said he expects that BSCC may hold meetings at other cities in Slovakia besides Bratislava. He noted that BSCC is open for other companies that may wish to join the Chamber and acknowledged that FM Logistic was taking part of the BSCC meeting for the first time as a member.

8. President Cigáň thanked the outgoing Ambassador of Brazil, Mr. Luis Balduino, for his efforts that culminated in the establishment of the BSCC, in 2017, and, along with other members, wished him success in the discharge of his new duties in Colombia. Ambassador Balduino thanked the support of the members and highlighted that the main motivation for the creation of the Chamber was to help fulfilling the large unexplored potential in bilateral trade.

9. After these matters were covered, the meeting was adjourned.