



Executive Vice-President Vestager
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

OPEN LETTER

Review of the EU Consortia Block Exemption Regulation

Brussels, 3 October 2022

Dear Executive Vice-President Vestager,

We wrote to you in July asking that a review of the Consortia Block Exemption Regulation (2009/906) be initiated, and we are grateful for the 'Call for Evidence' published by the Commission on 9 August.

The signatories of this letter are all international organisations representing the diversity of businesses that are users of liner shipping services or provide facilities and services to container shipping lines operating within the European Union.

The dramatic changes that have occurred in the container shipping market since the last renewal in 2020, have shown that the nature of the Block Exemption - which was originally intended to relate to port-to-port services only - has allowed carriers to benefit from important market developments. We are, therefore, united in calling for:

*A change of the legislative framework in which the container shipping lines are able to cooperate and therefore **not** for an (unaltered) extension of the de Consortia Block Exemption Regulation.*

As consumers or suppliers to the container shipping sector, we have lost confidence that the benefits of the Block Exemption are being fairly shared and that it is meeting its intended purpose. The purpose of competition policy is to protect the interests of customers and consumers from the predatory effects of dominant suppliers and the establishment of cartelized operations. The experiences, frustrations, and dissatisfaction of large swathes of European business with the behavior of global shipping lines demands a change in approach as a means of restoring trust and confidence in the container shipping industry, which is vital to the economies of member states and meeting the needs of European consumers and businesses.

Some of us will be making a response that will reflect the views and positions of our respective memberships.

Yours sincerely,



Nicolette van der Jagt
Director General
CLECAT



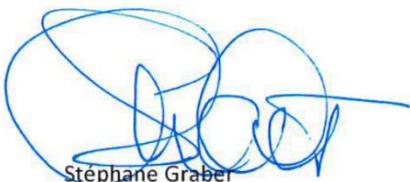
Godfried Smit
Secretary General
European Shippers' Council



Lamia Kerdjoudj-Belkaid
Secretary General
FEPORT



James Hookham
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Isabelle Ryckbost
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