



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Office of President José Manuel Barroso
Member of Cabinet

Brussels, 25 October 2012.

NOTE FOR THE FILE

Mission to Stockholm, Monday 8 October 2012

At the invitation of Katarina Areskoug, State Secretary to PM Reinfeldt, I accompanied Johannes Laitenberger to Stockholm for a series of meetings on 8 October 2012. Pierre Schellekens took part in all meetings.

- concerns about the forthcoming proposals to revise the **Tobacco Products Directive** and possible implications for snus (oral tobacco). Popular opinion runs very high on this issue in Sweden, and the specific derogation from the EU-wide ban had been crucial in gaining the necessary support for EU accession. The Swedish government considered that the health risks of snus were lower than other tobacco products and the product should be able to circulate freely in the EU. Johannes Laitenberger stressed that the proposals were still in the preparatory stage and the Commission had not yet taken a definitive view. However it was important to differentiate between the derogation for Sweden (which stems from the Accession Treaty) and the lifting of the ban elsewhere. In this respect, he recalled that the general tendency of legislative measures everywhere in Europe was not to facilitate but rather to further restrict access to tobacco products.