

*Some say, TTIP was over. What's your take on it?*

Pascal Lamy: I would not agree that it is over. But I have always said that it is a long process. Strategically, it makes a lot of sense for the US and the EU, where the level of precaution is the highest on the planet, to harmonize or at least compatibilize their precautionary systems and steer towards regulatory convergence.

*Are we talking about 5 months or 5 years?*

Lamy: In my view, it can only be an evolving process. It's not an internal market like in the European Union, but a bit similar. It takes a very long time, because it is very technical, very complex and very sensitive. So there is a lot of care that has to be taken politically. If anybody thought that this could be done in 2 or 3 years – that's what was said in the beginning – this was either miscomprehension of what the purpose was or cheating the people.

*If you look at the growing resistance against TTIP: Do you think politicians risk losing their constituencies?*

Lamy: I don't see the opposition growing. I see the places where there have been serious doubts from the very beginning, notably Germany and Austria. They have been the most anti-TTIP public opinions, and this has mostly to do with the investor-to-state issue. The question is extremely simple: Either you trust each other's judiciary systems or you don't. So far, the answer on both sides has been: We don't trust each other. Then you need a specific channel – it's as simple as that.

*There is not only resistance in Germany and Austria. In the US, both major party presidential candidates now seem to oppose trade agreements...*

Lamy: That's a different issue. The opposition to TTIP is not protectionist. Germany is not a protectionist country, it is a precautionist country, and Austria in many ways has the same cultural background. What Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton are saying about trade agreements in the U.S., is a classical protectionist reaction, based on the notion that trade opening makes more losers than winners for the U.S., which is a perfectly disputable proposition. I think this is not the right view, it's not what numbers say. But if that's what they believe, they will stop opening trade.

*What is going to happen after the U.S. elections? Will there be a new push to finish the TTIP negotiations?*

Lamy: We live in a world where many changes are happening, which creates questions of identity, belonging, and sense, of doubt and angst, rather than hope. Human history tells you that in such a situation the tendency is to scapegoat the foreigners. I wrote a book that shows that opening trade does not work automatically, but it works extremely well under certain conditions. Those of us who are in favor of it will have to be more convincing.