



Puertos del Estado holds talks with the European Commission to reach a technical solution to tax exemption

- The President, Ornella Chacón, will defend the continuity of the current system in Spanish ports during the process of negotiating with the EC

01/09/2019 (Spanish Ministry of Public Works and Transport). Puertos del Estado (PE) showed its surprise at the recommendation issued yesterday by the European Commission (EC) regarding tax exemptions in Spanish ports of general interest, given that both institutions had been in talks to reach a consensual solution since 2017. Notwithstanding this recommendation, which was announced yesterday without prior warning, PE remains open to dialog with the EC in order to reach a technical solution that satisfies the parties.

The President of Puertos del Estado, Ornella Chacón, reiterated her "negotiating vocation" as a way to reach "satisfactory solutions" to conflicts. In addition, she reassured the port authorities by guaranteeing that "she will defend the current system of exemptions" throughout the process of negotiating with the EC, since "we consider that this process is still in force and we will insist on enhancing it as the best instrument to reach a satisfactory technical solution."

PE considers that tax exemptions in Spanish ports do not go against Community law. It has viewed it this way from the outset and this argument has also been made by other countries involved in the same process such as France, Belgium, Holland and Italy, which reinforces the idea that exemptions are common instruments in EU Member States.

In addition, PE argues that direct taxes (such as Corporate Tax) are not harmonized among EU Member States, so Brussels must undertake such harmonization before making individual decisions.