



Press statement by President von der Leyen with Commissioner Šefčovič on EU countermeasures to US tariffs

Strasbourg, 12 March 2025

President von der Leyen:

The trade relations between the European Union and the United States are the biggest in the world. They have brought prosperity and security to millions of people. And trade has created millions of good jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. As of this morning, the United States is applying a 25% tariff on imports of steel and aluminium. We deeply regret this measure. Tariffs are taxes. They are bad for business, and worse for consumers. They are disrupting supply chains. They bring uncertainty for the economy. Jobs are at stake. Prices will go up. Nobody needs that – on both sides, neither in the European Union nor in the United States.

The European Union must act to protect consumers and business. The countermeasures we take today are strong but proportionate. As the United States are applying tariffs worth USD 28 billion, we are responding with countermeasures worth EUR 26 billion. This matches the economic scope of the tariffs from the United States.

Our countermeasures will be introduced in two steps, starting with 1 April and fully in place as of 13 April. In the meantime, we will always remain open to negotiations.

We firmly believe that in a world fraught with geoeconomic and political uncertainties, it is not in our common interest to burden our economies with such tariffs. We are ready to engage in a meaningful dialogue. I have entrusted Trade Commissioner Maroš **Šefčovič** to resume his talks to explore better solutions with the United States.

Commissioner Maroš Šefčovič:

Thank you, Madame President.

Let me start by echoing the sentiments of regret. Today's tariffs from the United States take us in the wrong direction and the reason is manyfold. The EU-US trade partnership is well balanced and highly profitable to both sides. On steel and aluminium particularly, we share some of the challenges – for instance, global overcapacities driven by non-market practices – and the European Union is part of the solution, not the problem.

Last month, during my visit to Washington to raise these points, it was indeed clear that the European Union isn't the problem, making today's measures even more unjustified. I argued to avoid the unnecessary burden of measures and countermeasures. But you need both hands to clap.

The US Administration has opted to pursue a harmful course of unjustified tariffs, leaving us with no choice but to respond – and that's exactly what we are doing.

First, as of April, we will automatically reinstate our currently suspended rebalancing measures from 2018 and 2020, effectively targeting EUR 4.5 billion worth of US goods exported to us.

Second, the Commission is taking decisive steps towards a package of additional countermeasures applying to EUR 18 billion of US exports to the EU.

Over the next two weeks, we will consult with key stakeholders to help us shape this new package:

The objective is to counterbalance the increased trade value affected by the US tariffs, while minimising the impact on European businesses and consumers. But the disruption caused by tariffs is avoidable if the US Administration accepts our extended hand and works with us to strike a deal.

Under the President's leadership, I am ready to negotiate. We are ready to make it happen.

STATEMENT/25/752

Press contacts:

[Paula PINHO](#) (+32 2 29 20815)

[Arianna PODESTA](#) (+32 2 298 70 24)

[Stefan DE KEERSMAECKER](#) (+32 2 29 84680)

General public inquiries: [Europe Direct](#) by phone [00 800 67 89 10 11](#) or by [email](#)

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