

23.05.2018
Brussels,
JM/is Ares(2018)

Dear Ms Goyens, Dear Mr Mierzwinski,

Thank you for sharing the view of the Transatlantic Consumer Dialogue in relation to the US Section 232 measures on steel and aluminium.

As you are aware, the US has imposed additional duties on steel and aluminium imported from most countries. Shipments from the EU have been recently temporarily excluded from these measures for an additional thirty days period until 1 June 2018. The EU continues to be of the view that it should be permanently exempted from the US measures.

Transparency, as you have correctly indicated in your letter, is an essential part of the EU trade policy. The Commission remains committed to transparency in the conduct of EU trade policy. I have therefore kept both the Committee on International Trade ("INTA") of the European Parliament and the Trade Policy Committee ("TPC") of the Council of the European Union fully informed of my discussions with the US counterparts on the US Section 232 measures. I have also explained these ongoing demarches in my public speeches on this topic and media interventions. Furthermore, I will use the opportunity of the upcoming Civil Society Dialogue on 28 May 2018 to further debrief the civil society actors on this issue.

On the other hand, I do appreciate your concerns about the respect of European health, safety, environmental and privacy standards. However, as I conveyed in the last meeting with INTA on 23 April 2018, there is currently no thought of reviving TTIP discussions, either in the EU or the US. I also want to stress that the EU will not conclude an agreement similar to the one that was concluded by South Korea on the US Section 232 measures, because it would not be compatible with WTO rules.

Should the US not grant a permanent exemption on steel and aluminium tariffs for EU exports, the Commission will move forward to reserve its rights under the WTO Agreement on Safeguards, providing the possibility for the EU at a future stage to raise import tariffs on selected goods imported from the US.

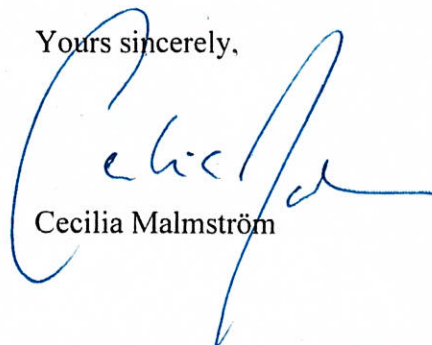
Monique Goyens
Director General, BEUC
EU Co-Chair of TACD

Edmund Mierzwinski
Senior Director, Consumer Programmes, U.S. PIRG
US Co-Chair of TACD

24 Highbury Crescent,
London, N5 1RX,
United Kingdom

I would like to conclude by informing you that we have received more than 200 hundred submissions in response to the questionnaire we published in the context of our 232 response. Among them, we also received inputs from various consumer associations, and the EU list of the products expressed has been amended to take them into account where possible.

Yours sincerely,



Cecilia Malmström