



## **Statement by President von der Leyen on the announcement of universal tariffs by the US**

Samarkand, 2 April 2025

President Trump's announcement of universal tariffs on the whole world, including the EU, is a major blow to the world economy.

I deeply regret this choice.

Let's be clear-eyed about the immense consequences.

The global economy will massively suffer.

Uncertainty will spiral and trigger the rise of further protectionism.

The consequences will be dire for millions of people around the globe.

Also for the most vulnerable countries, which are now subject to some of the highest US tariffs.

The opposite of what we want to achieve.

The tariffs will also hurt consumers around the world.

It will be felt immediately.

Millions of citizens will face higher grocery bills.

Medication will cost more as well as transportation.

Inflation will go up.

And this is hurting in particular the most vulnerable citizens.

All businesses – big and small – will suffer from day one.

From greater uncertainty to the disruption of supply chains to burdensome bureaucracy.

The cost of doing business with the United States will drastically increase.

And what is more, there seems to be no order in the disorder.

No clear path through the complexity and chaos that is being created as all US trading partners are hit.

In the past eighty years, trade between Europe and the United States has created millions of jobs.

Consumers across the Atlantic have benefited from reduced prices.

Businesses have benefited from huge opportunities leading to unprecedented growth and prosperity.

At the same time, we know that the global trading system has serious deficiencies.

I agree with President Trump, that others are taking unfair advantage of the current rules.

And I am ready to support any efforts to make the global trading system fit for the realities of the global economy.

But I also want to be clear: Reaching for tariffs as your first and last tool will not fix it.

That is why, from the outset, we have always been ready to negotiate with the US, to remove any remaining barriers to Transatlantic trade.

At the same time, we are prepared to respond.

We are already finalising a first package of countermeasures in response to tariffs on steel.

And we are now preparing for further countermeasures, to protect our interests and our businesses if negotiations fail.

We will also be watching closely what indirect effects these tariffs could have, because we cannot absorb global overcapacity nor will we accept dumping on our market

As Europeans we will always promote and defend our interests and values.

And we will always stand up for Europe.

But there is an alternative path.

It is not too late to address concerns through negotiations.

This is why our Trade Commissioner, Maros Šefčovič, is permanently engaged with his US counterparts.

We will work towards reducing barriers, not raising them.

Let's move from confrontation to negotiation.

Finally I would also like to speak directly to my fellow Europeans.

I know that many of you feel let down by our oldest ally.

Yes, we must brace for the impact that this will inevitably have.

Europe has everything it needs to make it through this storm.

We are in this together.

If you take on one of us, you take on all of us.

So we will stand together and stand up for each other.

Our unity is our strength.

Europe has the largest Single Market in the world - 450 million consumers - that is our safe harbour in tumultuous times.

And Europe will stand at the side of those directly impacted.

We have already announced new measures to support the steel and cars sectors.

Last week, we limited the amount of steel that can be imported to Europe tariff-free.

This will give more breathing space to these strategic industries.

Now we will also convene Strategic Dialogues with the steel, the automotive and the pharmaceutical sector.

And others will follow.

Europe stands together for our businesses, for our workers, and for all Europeans.

And we will continue to build bridges with all those that like us care about fair and rules-based trade as the basis for shared prosperity.

Thank you.

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