

Ms Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

Brussels, 24 June 2025

Reinforcing the EU's Trade Defence Capacity – An urgent call to act in support of European industry

Dear President von der Leyen,

The European chemical industry is increasingly exposed to unfair trade practices—and the EU's capacity to respond is being tested like never before.

In 2024, the European Commission launched more than twice as many new trade defence investigations compared to the previous five years. Cases concerning chemical products are now the most frequent in the EU—underlining the urgency for our sector. Unfortunately, 2024 was not an outlier but follows the rise in 2023, with no signs of easing in 2025. As global trade disruptions persist and market distortions deepen, the need for a robust and agile response becomes even more critical.

Strengthening the EU's trade defence capacity with more human resources and tools is not optional—it is a strategic necessity. No European site should be forced to close because of a lack of sufficient resources in DG TRADE. Therefore, in the context of Chemical Industry Action Plan, Cefic calls for an increase of at least twenty additional full time employees for Directorate G of DG TRADE to ensure this critical function of the European Commission is sufficiently staffed to respond swiftly and decisively where justified. This will not only help the chemical sector, but also support other sectors facing unfair commercial practices.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome your initiative to set up the import surveillance task force and to launch the new import surveillance tool, which will help deter harmful trade diversion. We look forward to working with your services to further refine and improve the approach by expanding the focus to exports and predictive tools.

In closing, as an export-oriented sector we would like to underline our steadfast support for the European Commission's agenda to diversify our global trade relations through new agreements. Concluding and ratifying meaningful Free Trade Agreements and other instruments such as Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships is key to open and deepen access to global growth markets and raw materials.

Yours sincerely,



Marco Mensink
Cefic Director General

This letter will also be shared for information with Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maroš Šefčovič and DG TRADE