



Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President of the European Commission

Virginijus Sinkevičius
Member of the European Commission

Brussels,

Dear Mr Mensink,

We would like to thank you for your letter of 2 July 2020 on the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability. President von der Leyen has asked us to reply on her behalf.

The Strategy is being developed on the basis of a number of policy evaluations that the Commission has concluded in the past years on the EU chemicals legislation. These include, in particular, the second REACH review adopted in 2018 and the Fitness Check of all chemicals legislation (except REACH) adopted in 2019, but also evaluations of other relevant legislation in the area of products and environment and workers' protection. In addition, we are currently finalising a Fitness Check of the EU legislation on endocrine disruptors. These evaluations give us a comprehensive view of the achievements of and gaps in our chemicals policy.

The evaluations clearly show that the EU has a very advanced and protective regulatory framework on chemicals, based on world-class knowledge on chemicals. At the same time, they have brought to our attention a number of gaps, weaknesses and challenges that we need to address in order to fully achieve our policy objectives.

We can assure you that the Chemicals Strategy for Sustainability does not intend to overhaul the current regulatory system, but rather to strengthen and simplify it, as announced in the European Green Deal. We need, in particular, to respond rapidly to alerts from scientists and to concerns from citizens on a number of pressing health and environmental issues linked to exposure to hazardous chemicals, in particular endocrine disruptors, the combination effects of chemicals, hazardous substances in products and persistent substances.

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Mr Marco Mensink
Director General
European Chemical Industry Council - Cefic aisbl

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Protecting health and the environment can and must go hand in hand with competitiveness and innovation. The EU industry has the expertise and the capacity to move to a safer and more sustainable production and use of chemicals, building on the efforts and achievements of the past decades. The Strategy is an opportunity to catalyse this shift and support industry in the efforts needed for the green and digital transition. Only a sustainable industry can remain competitive and only a competitive industry can help to achieve and promote high standards in Europe and the world.

We can also reassure you that any legal proposal to be announced in the Strategy will follow our Better Regulation guidelines, including impact assessments and consultations with stakeholders. Let us also take this occasion to thank you for your contribution to the public consultation on the Roadmap for the Strategy. Feedback from stakeholders is a key part of our policy development and is duly taken into account in our preparation of the Strategy.

Yours faithfully,



Frans Timmermans



Virginijus Sinkevičius