

10% US tariff on aluminium requires immediate action from the EU, European Aluminium says

Brussels, 8 March 2018 – European Aluminium, the voice of the entire aluminium value chain, is confident the EU Commission will do everything it can to exempt European countries from the 10% US tariff in the next 15 days, but requests immediate market surveillance and the implementation of safeguard measures if proven necessary.

“We are deeply concerned about the US decision to impose a 10% tariff on all aluminium products from Europe (EU+EFTA). As a long-standing political ally with strongly interlinked aluminium value chains and numerous multinationals operating on both territories, Europe should have been exempted from the tariff. If the tariff comes into force, it will greatly damage our trading relationship with the US. The EU currently exports 1.2 billion euro of direct aluminium products to the US, shares many industrial clusters, innovation hubs and transatlantic synergies. As Commissioner Malmström said, it is time to act and stand up for the thousands of jobs, investments and innovation opportunities at immediate risk,” commented Gerd Götz, Director General of European Aluminium.

Even if Europe will be exempted from the measures, a US tariff on aluminium from targeted countries will still impact the European industry. European Aluminium estimates that a further 20% of primary aluminium exports and 35% of semi-fabricated aluminium products could end up in Europe due to a redirection of metal flows from third countries.

“The US measures hit us where it hurts most. The European aluminium value chain is already under enormous pressure due to unsustainable Chinese overcapacities. The imposed tariff and influx of additional non-European aluminium could have severe economic consequences for SME’s in countries such as Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Sweden and Central and East European countries.”

“Unilateral measures such as the US tariffs will not effectively address Chinese overcapacities. This global challenge can only be managed effectively through a global and long-term solution based on multilateral rules and common enforcement like a Global Aluminium Forum within G20,” explained Götz.

“We strongly urge the European Commission to act without hesitation by implementing immediate market surveillance and WTO-compatible safeguard measures if proven necessary. We also call on the European Council to hold an extraordinary meeting to endorse these measures. If we do not act immediately, Europe is at risk to lose a strategic industry which is essential to decarbonise the entire economy, make our buildings more efficient and our cars lighter,” Götz concluded.

About European Aluminium:

European Aluminium, founded in 1981 and based in Brussels, is the voice of the aluminium industry in Europe. We actively engage with decision makers and the wider stakeholder community to promote the outstanding properties of aluminium, secure growth and optimise the contribution our metal can make to meeting Europe’s sustainability challenges. Through environmental and technical expertise, economic and statistical analysis, scientific research, education and sharing of best practices, public affairs and communication activities, European Aluminium promotes the use of aluminium as a material with permanent properties that is part of the solution to achieving sustainable goals, while maintaining and improving the image of the industry, of the material and of its applications among their stakeholders. Our 80+ members include primary aluminium producers; downstream manufacturers of extruded, rolled and cast aluminium; producers of recycled aluminium and national aluminium associations are representing more than 600 plants in 30 European countries. Aluminium products are used in a wide range of markets, including automotive, transport, high-tech engineering, building, construction and packaging.

For further information, please contact: communications@european-aluminium.eu, +32 2 775 63 63