

PRESS RELEASE

US SECTION 232: EU LEADERS' RESPONSE MUST BE "BROAD, FIRM AND DECISIVE", ARGUES EUROFER

Brussels 20 March 2018 – EU leaders are gathering in Brussels on 22-23 March for a European Council meeting. In light of President Trump's Section 232 25% import tariffs on steel, the European Steel Association (EUROFER) calls on EU member states to stand united in backing a broad, firm and decisive response to safeguard the viability of the EU steel industry and its 320,000 jobs.

"The EU and the US have close economic, political, military and cultural ties", said Axel Eggert, Director General of EUROFER. "Supporting these links, European steel has always been a reliable supplier to US steel users. The Section 232 measures fly in the face of this close partnership".

"We are already seeing the effects of Trump's announcement", stated Mr Eggert. "In the first two months of this year imports surged by 12% over and above the historic highs of 2016-2017".

This rise is on top of the 65% rise seen over the past five years. Steel imports into the EU have now reached 40-million tonnes¹, making the EU by far the largest steel import market in the world, even before the US tariffs came into being. For certain products, such as concrete reinforcing steel bars (rebar), the import surge has already been as much as 75% in the past two months on top of a 98% rise between 2013-2017.

"The deflection of steel trade flows to Europe would badly hurt us and sectors related to us. Clear and immediate decisions need to be taken by EU leaders to prevent this injury", emphasised Mr Eggert. "What we need now is comprehensive safeguard measures that limit imports of all steel covered by the US measures products to the levels of the past few years".

EUROFER advocates safeguards that cover the scope of the steel products covered by the US measure. All of these product categories will suffer trade deflection, up to an estimated total of 13 million tonnes, possibly straight onto the open EU market. A quota safeguard would ensure the EU market remains open but avoid the risks of inundation by deflected steel.

"In addition, the EU must continue to demand full exclusion from the US measures", stressed Mr Eggert.

"When the European Council gathers on Thursday and Friday, we hope that they will take the need to counter the US move decisively and without delay seriously", concluded Mr Eggert. "However, EU leaders should also continue their dialogue with US by supporting the work already underway in the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity."

¹ Of the products covered by the scope of the Section 232 measures

NOTES FOR EDITORS

CONTACT

Charles de Lusignan, Communications Manager, +32 2 738 79 35, (charles@eurofer.be)

PDF

A PDF of this Press Release is available: [here](#)

SECTION 232 REPORT

The Section 232 of the 1962 Trade Expansion Act steel report can be found: [here](#)

EUROFER PRESS CONFERENCE ON SECTION 232

If you missed EUROFER's press conference on Section 232 on 12 March 2018, you can find it: [here](#)

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN STEEL ASSOCIATION (EUROFER)

EUROFER AISBL is located in Brussels and was founded in 1976. It represents the entirety of steel production in the European Union. EUROFER members are steel companies and national steel federations throughout the EU. The major steel companies and national steel federations in Switzerland and Turkey are associate members.

ABOUT THE EUROPEAN STEEL INDUSTRY

The European steel industry is a world leader in innovation and environmental sustainability. It has a turnover of around €170 billion and directly employs 320,000 highly-skilled people, producing on average 160 million tonnes of steel per year. More than 500 steel production sites across 22 EU Member States provide direct and indirect employment to millions more European citizens. Closely integrated with Europe's manufacturing and construction industries, steel is the backbone for development, growth and employment in Europe.

Steel is the most versatile industrial material in the world. The thousands of different grades and types of steel developed by the industry make the modern world possible. Steel is 100% recyclable and therefore is a fundamental part of the circular economy. As a basic engineering material, steel is also an essential factor in the development and deployment of innovative, CO₂-mitigating technologies, improving resource efficiency and fostering sustainable development in Europe.

