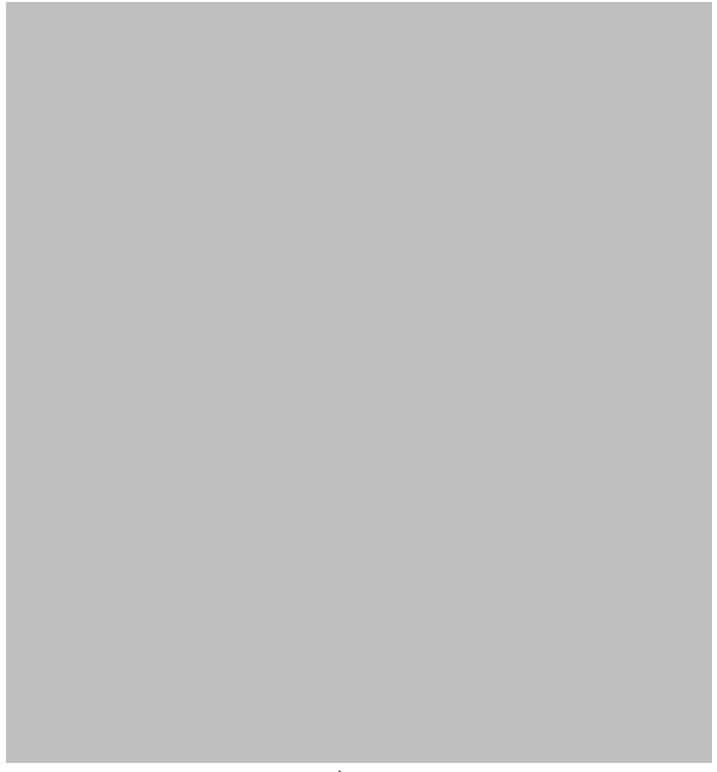
High-level round table meeting with the representatives of the signatories of the product safety pledge Opening remarks and briefing



Meeting between Commissioner Reynders and the signatories of the Product Safety

Virtual meeting, meeting room BER - JREY - JEAN REY -09/11/2021 11:00-12:15

Opening remarks

- In 2018, four online marketplaces Amazon,
 voluntarily pledged their commitment to increase the safety of products sold online.
- Today, you are 11 taking part in our Product Safety Pledge.
- In the last reporting period, 97% of products identified via public recall websites, such as EU Safety Gate, were removed within two working days.
- This is brilliant.
- I want to say a big thank you, on behalf of the European Commission for your commitment.

- We talk a lot about legislation but we know that voluntary initiatives really work.
- You are the proof.
- This is why I am keen to extend the Product Safety Pledge further and why I am happy to have you here with me today.
- For example, could we have voluntary pledges to ensure online reviews are fair?
- Could companies like yours pledge to design their online interfaces in a fair way for consumers?
- Could companies pledge to cooperate with enforcers to tackle the problem of misleading green claims for example?
- I know that you are facing changes in the legislative landscape, not least following the proposals for a Digital Services Act and a General Product Safety Regulation.
- Shortly the Commission will also make a proposal to have EU-wide rules on sustainable corporate governance.
- And we will be making a proposal to ensure that consumers are empowered to make sustainable choices and contribute to achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal.
- These are all very necessary developments.
- Take the GPSD as an example. The General Product Safety Directive, was adopted in 2002 when only nine percent of Europeans were shopping online.

- Last year, seventy-two percent of internet users shopped online in the EU and the sale of new digital products has grown in parallel.
- This legislation needs to cover these products.
- I'll give you another example. 85% of respondents to a recent Commission survey said they were unsatisfied or only partially satisfied with the environmental information available to them.
- One of the reasons frequently given was that they felt information was generally not sufficient to support consumer decision-making.
- We also know that greenwashing and planned obsolescence are very real problems which directly hinder our chances of a sustainable future.
- EU legislation needs to address this. This is what we will shortly propose.
- In the meantime, voluntary commitments from companies are already making a big difference.
- For example, the Green Consumption Pledge which is the Product Safety Pledge's sustainable cousin – has encouraged major EU companies to make new commitments to improve their sustainability.

- In short, my message to you is that we cannot afford to wait for legislation to catch up to reality. And nor do we have to.
- I know you know this as your companies have already gone above and beyond to protect consumers while we ensure that product safety legislation is fit for the digital era.
- So I want to make the Product Safety Pledge bigger and better, with the widest support and ideas.
- This afternoon, DG JUST is also organising the first ever Annual Digital Consumer Event where we will also share our ideas for extending voluntary cooperation to other topics.
- Of course we can't do this without you so I look forward to hearing your thoughts today!
- Thank you!



