

Putting Europe in top gear

Speech by Cecilia Malmström

European Commissioner for Trade

European Automobile Manufacturers' Association (ACEA)

Brussels, 1 June 2017

Art 4.1(b), ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me here today.

According to your own figures, EU production is responsible for over one in five of the world's cars.

Alongside related services, it is responsible for 1 in 20 EU jobs.

The annual value of our exports, €140 billion, could almost pay off the euro area public deficit at a stroke; and we export three and a half times as much as we import.

It's a sector that invests in innovation, as the next generation of cars come on the market; green, digital, self-driving.

More than that, it is a sector which embodies the phenomenon we call globalisation.

We policy makers talk about the complexity of global value chains; you live them, every day.

The cars you make, the steel and parts and technology you make them from, the machinery and workers and factories who assemble them, the capital that funds them, the customers that buy them...

... all may come from different countries and corners of the world.

That complexity shows the hollowness of the simple slogans of protectionists.

After all, the biggest exporter of cars from the US is a European company, a factory built with European investment.

Trade isn't a game you win or lose. Rebuild barriers and we all lose.

Likewise, this sector sees every day the non-tariff barriers we are constantly identifying and working together to remove.

Our policy challenge is your bottom line.

Unfair taxes and subsidies, unnecessary rules and restrictions hamper your opportunities and your business.

And for all these reasons, this is an industry that has benefited hugely from our trade agenda, and our commitment to commerce that is open, rules-based and fair.

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[REDACTED] Out of scope [REDACTED]

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So let me set out a bit for you where we are with our trade agenda.

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[Other bilateral negotiations]

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Out of scope

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Out of scope

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With many of the world's other biggest economies, talks continue.

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If Japan is the fourth biggest economic player on the planet, the fifth is Mercosur. For vehicles and parts alone, tariffs to this region cost EU companies €1 billion.

We relaunched our trade talks just over a year ago, and there is constructive engagement across the board.

Political messages seem to be filtering down to the technical level. I hope that, as an EU industry standing to benefit, you will also be lending your support.

In all these talks, of course, we will continue to negotiate in line with the approach set out in our 2015 "Trade for All" strategy.

To bring down trade barriers, helping businesses grow and create jobs; helping consumers get lower prices, better choice.

Protecting and promoting our standards.

A trade policy based on our values, and negotiated in transparency.

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