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CECE PRESS RELEASE

Expanded US tariffs to hit € 2.8 billion worth of European exports in construction equipment

In an unexpected decision, the US administration expanded the scope of existing Section 232 tariffs on steel and aluminium to cover 400 additional customs codes, including construction and mining equipment. The tariff for these machines will apply 50% to the value of their steel content, plus a 15% baseline tariff for the rest of the machine.

This means the effective tariff rate will fall somewhere between 15% and very close to 50%, making transatlantic trade significantly more challenging. EU exports of construction equipment to the US in 2024 totalled €3.49 billion, representing 27% of all extra-EU exports. The new duties cover 80% of that trade flow, putting approximately €2.8 billion of EU exports at risk.

"We call on the European Commission to urgently negotiate an agreement with the US administration to exclude European construction equipment exports from the scope of the US Section 232 tariffs on steel, aluminium, copper and related derivatives. We stand ready to support the European Commission in all ways necessary" said Riccardo Viaggi, CECE Secretary General.

In addition, the US administration announced that the list of Section 232 tariff codes will be reviewed every four months, further increasing unpredictability. Calculating the steel and aluminum content of the machinery turns implementation into a bureaucratic monster for both manufacturers and US customs authorities. Market access is thus made disproportionately difficult, and manufacturers are subject to enormous risks of errors, with legal consequences.

The effects of the tariffs are dramatic in terms of increased costs, administrative burden and challenging stability and predictability for economic operators. The US construction industry relies on high-technology construction equipment, which is very often imported from Europe. Needlessly making construction machinery - both imported and US-produced - more expensive by introducing tariffs will further damage the economic prospects of an industry that is already in a downturn.

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About CECE

CECE, the Committee for European Construction Equipment, represents the interests of 1,200 construction equipment manufacturers through national trade associations in Europe. The annual turnover of the European construction machinery sector is € 59 billion, with € 15 billion in extra-EU exports. CECE members invest and innovate continuously to deliver equipment with highest productivity and lowest environmental impact. Efficiency, safety and high-precision technologies are key. See also www.cece.eu.