

INTA written questions for the confirmation hearing of Maroš Šefčovič
Portfolio: Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security and Commissioner for
Interinstitutional Relations and Transparency

1. The Union trade, investment and competitiveness strategy for the next five years

A strong trade and investment agenda is indispensable for stimulating economic growth and sustainable development, creating jobs and increasing the attractiveness and competitiveness of our single market. Please elaborate on your trade and investment strategy:

- On the plurilateral and multilateral fronts, how will you build a coalition for the modernisation of the WTO, overcoming the challenges to its rule-making function and ensuring we have a fully functioning dispute settlement system? How do you plan for the Union to lead preparations for a successful 14th Ministerial Conference? Will you initiate and advance negotiations for multilateral and, if necessary, plurilateral agreements on gaps in the WTO rule book, including state intervention in support of industrial sectors, the establishment of a multilateral investment court and the implementation of agreements already reached?
- On the bilateral front, which bilateral trade negotiations will you prioritise and according to what timelines? How will you ensure a level playing field with non-EU countries and address China's unfair trading practices? How will you address trade irritants with the US, and safeguard and strengthen the Trade and Technology Council to promote transatlantic leadership in trade and key technologies?
- How will you ensure that the common commercial policy (CCP) effectively remains an area of exclusive competence for the Union? Will you decisively tackle any form of circumvention or unilateral practices by Member States and how will you do this? How will you ensure that the ratification of trade and investment agreements containing only provisions falling within the EU's exclusive competence is determined solely at EU level? Will you commit to ensure that no provisional application of trade and investment agreements, including trade chapters of broader agreements, is requested before Parliament has given its consent on those agreements? Will you promote sectoral agreements as an option when comprehensive agreements are not feasible? How will you promote digital trade to the benefit of companies and consumers?
- How will you ensure that the CCP promotes fundamental values, international conventions, and global climate, environmental and labour standards and that it defends the interests of consumers and workers, including with regard to digital trade? How will you implement the new approach on trade and sustainable development in existing and future agreements, in particular with regard to the SDGs, the Paris Agreement, ILO Conventions and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework?

2. Economic security

Economic security aims to minimise risks while preserving the highest possible level of economic openness and competitiveness and should never be used as an instrument to restrict trade unduly. In this regard:

- How will you ensure that economic security, trade and investment are all part of an integrated approach? What steps will you take in designing and implementing the economic security agenda? How do you see the role of trade within the concept of a 'new foreign economic policy' and how will you ensure that trade is used as a geostrategic tool?
- How do you intend to use the toolkit of trade defence measures adopted during the ninth and previous legislative terms as part of a new economic security doctrine? Do you see any

gaps in the existing toolkit? What will be your next steps with regard to export control and outbound investments?

- How will you reinforce the partnering pillar of the economic security strategy? What will Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships consist of? How will you ensure consistency and synergies with the Global Gateway? Will Parliament be in a position to provide consent following the conclusion of such agreements? How will you promote access to critical raw materials from non-EU countries in a mutually beneficial way and how will you ensure more scrutiny for Parliament?
- How will you support and cooperate with other Commissioners on the economic recovery of Ukraine and other partner countries affected by Russia's war of aggression, notably through an ambitious review of the EU-Ukraine DCFTA, macro-financial assistance, vigorous enforcement of the sanctions regime against Russia and the avoidance of any form of circumvention?

3. Implementation, enforcement and communication

A good policy that is poorly implemented, enforced and communicated can lead to pushback, both internally and externally, against the Union and its trade policy. To ensure the success of the CCP:

- How will you ensure that trade and economic security policies are front and centre in your role as Commissioner, also given your double portfolio? How will you break down the silos in which the CCP and other Union internal and external policies operate, as well as the silos of DG Trade and other parts of the Commission and the EEAS?
- How will you foster cooperation, ownership and uptake by companies and non-EU countries notably with respect to CBAM, EUDR, CSDDD, the Forced Labour Regulation, revised ETS as well as the regulation on packaging and packaging waste? How will you help ensure that all these new instruments are applied fully and consistently and that the trade aspects of our internal legislation are sufficiently taken into account when instruments are designed, implemented and revised? What measures will you take to render the Union's customs system more efficient, thus contributing to the effective implementation of some of the Union's recent trade-related instruments? How will you continue to ensure that any future Union measures are compatible with WTO rules?
- What concrete actions will you take to ensure that EU trade policy is better communicated and explained to stakeholders, the general public, Member States' institutions and non-EU countries, including with the support of the Commission's representations and EU delegations around the world?
- How will you strengthen the participation of SMEs in the global market? How do you plan to support companies, especially SMEs, in the implementation of newly adopted legislation with the objective of easing the regulatory burden, streamlining procedures and ensuring they reap the benefits of increased market access in trade agreements? Will you ensure that all major trade-related initiatives are accompanied by an impact assessment that also covers the external impact of potential Union measures?
- How do you intend to engage with and take into account the views of business representatives, trade unions and NGOs, including via Domestic Advisory Groups that have been set up to advise on the implementation of EU trade agreements?

INTA written question for the confirmation hearing of Kaja Kallas
Portfolio: High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the Commission

You have been tasked with shaping a ‘new foreign economic policy’, working with the Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy. Could you outline your initial ideas regarding the content of this policy and the envisaged timeline? What is the role of trade and investment in this policy? How do you intend to cooperate with the Commissioner in charge of trade and economic security on the design and implementation of this new foreign economic policy, as well as on shaping the Union’s external relations more generally, while respecting human rights and fundamental values? In your role as Vice-President, how will you ensure that the impact on our trade partners will be taken into consideration more systematically in the design and implementation of Union legislation? How, concretely, do you intend to engage with non-EU countries impacted by Union legislation, and how do you intend to cooperate with other Commissioners on this matter?

INTA written question for the confirmation hearing of Jozef Síkela
Portfolio: Commissioner for International Partnerships

With regard to trade relations with partner countries, including improved access to critical resources, what concrete measures will you take to ensure that trade aspects become more prominent in the design and implementation of the Global Gateway strategy? Specifically, how do you intend to reinforce links and overlaps between the investment facilitation agreements and the Global Gateway strategy and how will you ensure synergies with the new Clean Trade and Investment Partnerships to the mutual benefit of the Union and partner countries? How will you adapt the Global Gateway strategy to deal with the increasing geopolitical trade tensions and the stronger role of emerging economies (e.g. China, India), including on the African continent? How will you involve the International Trade Committee in the design and implementation of the strategy?

INTA written question for the confirmation hearing of Stéphane Séjourné
Portfolio: Executive Vice-President for Prosperity and Industrial Strategy

In a climate of heightened global uncertainty and an increased need to consolidate the Union’s economic security agenda and to strengthen our competitiveness, how will you ensure that economic security, trade, investment and industrial policies are all part of a cohesive approach that fosters the Union’s open strategic autonomy and resilience? How will you design and implement the economic security agenda and over what time frame? Building on the earlier exchanges between Parliament and the Commission on the Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1441, will you give an assurance that when the first report on the implementation of the Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) is presented by 13 July 2026, a legislative proposal to amend the FSR will also be presented? Given the significantly higher than expected case load related to notified bids in public procurement procedures, will you ensure a substantial increase in the number of staff responsible for the implementation of the FSR within the Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs?

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