

PRESS RELEASE

**The European Parliament adopts a Motion for a resolution setting out its priorities for the EU Trade Policy review**

**26 November 2020 – With 593 in favour and 50 against, the European Parliament adopt its recommendations for the European Commission on the renewed strategy for Trade, calling for the reform of the WTO system, the improvement of business and trading conditions for SMEs, new trade barriers removal and *inter alia* the adoption of early actions against unfair trading practices.**

The European Parliament adopted today its Resolution on the Trade Policy Review calling on the Commission to incorporate substantial policy recommendations into its future strategy, touching upon issues of “Open Strategic Autonomy”, multilateral rules-based trading system, cooperation in international relations and other horizontal issues, among which the call for a trade policy placing SMEs at its core.

The European ceramic industry, as a sector mostly composed of innovative SMEs at high-export intensity, welcomes the commitment to improving market access and trade opportunities for SMEs via ad-hoc chapters in any trade agreement, and in particular the commitment to easing the regulatory burden and compliance costs linked to complex legislation. We stress the importance for the Commission to monitor and address at any level new trade barriers and other trade distortions, and to deepen cooperation with trading partners as a way forward in redressing trade and market-distorting practices.

As stated by Cerame-Unie President Alain Delcourt, *“we stand aside the call for the Commission to guarantee that early actions are taken against unfair trading practices from global partners as soon as injuries appear and to implement a global level playing field apt to boost the competitiveness of EU businesses, in particular of SMEs”*. In this regard, we agree that the newly appointed CTEO will play a crucial role in ensuring the enforcement of EU and WTO trade agreements and the implementation of TDI instruments to the greatest extent possible.

As a sector fully-pledged toward open and fair trade, we support the call of the Parliament for the modernisation, strengthening, and “reactivation” of the WTO system, along with a reform of its Appellate Body.

*The European ceramic industry covers a wide range of products including abrasives, bricks & roof tiles, clay pipes, wall & floor tiles, refractories, sanitaryware, table- & ornamentalware, technical ceramics, expanded clay and flower pots. The industry generates over 200,000 direct jobs and a production value of €31 billion in the EU.*

**Cerame-Unie aisbl**

Rue Belliard 12 - 1000 Brussels - Tel: +32 2 808 38 80 - sec@cerameunie.eu - www.cerameunie.eu - twitter.com/CerameUnie  
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