

PRESS RELEASE – 13 January 2025

PRESENTATION OF THE FOURTH REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF EU TRADE POLICY

Brussels, 13/01/2025 – Cerame-Unie welcomes the presentation of the Commission’s 4th Report on implementation and enforcement of EU Trade Agreements on 13 December 2024. The EU Ceramic Industry is an export-oriented sector and a key contributor to the EU’s trade balance. For this reason, Cerame-Unie remains in close contact with the Commission to actively address the concerns of EU ceramic exporters and ensure that trade barriers are solved in the most effective and timely manner. Click [here](#) for the full report.

Cerame-Unie welcomes the Commission’s fourth report, initially published on 4 October 2024 and presented by Chief Trade Enforcement Officer Denis Redonnet during a Civil Society Dialogue on the 13th of December 2024 ([link](#)). During his presentation, Mr. Redonnet acknowledged the difficulties faced by SMEs when reporting trade barriers and reiterated the Commission’s commitment to use trade policy tools to their fullest extent.

As indicated in the report, European economic operators benefit from a strong network of 42 trade agreements covering 74 countries and EUR 2.3 trillion in trade value. As an export-oriented industry, agreements concluded with Canada, South Korea or Singapore, among others, helped EU ceramic exporters to strengthen their presence in foreign markets. Free trade should however only be encouraged when international trade rules are respected and a level playing field is ensured. The ceramic industry already suffers from growing unfair trade practices from some exporting countries. The industry therefore urges the EU to take this into consideration when negotiating new FTAs, notably with India, and to increase resources dedicated to trade enforcement.

For this reason also, Cerame-Unie fully supports the Commission’s continuous efforts to identify and remove trade barriers affecting EU exporters, and SMEs in particular. As mentioned in the report, the EU launched a bilateral dispute settlement case on 14 June 2024 against Algeria under the EU-Algeria Association Agreement to address multiple restrictions including the import ban on several ceramic products ([link](#)). During the discussion with CTEO D. Redonnet, Cerame-Unie welcomed the prompt use of dispute settlement procedures in this case and highlighted benefits of using both diplomatic and legal means to achieve faster results in similar situations.

The European Ceramic Industry also welcomed the Commission’s recent actions towards solving long standing barriers, including burdensome certification procedure and quality marks in Saudi

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Arabia ([link](#)). Cerame-Unie will monitor the implementation of Saudi Arabia's commitments and work with the Commission to address any remaining obstacle for EU exporters.

As an active user of EU Trade policy instruments and a member of the Market Access Advisory Committee, Cerame-Unie remains in close contact with EU institutions to actively address the concerns of our companies and ensure that problems with trading partners are solved in the most effective and timely manner. Enforcement of EU trade policy is a key priority for the industry.