



Mr Maroš Šefčovič
Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security

Mr Olivér Várhelyi
Commissioner for Health and Animal Welfare

European Commission
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Bruxelles / Brussel
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Dear Maroš, dear Olivér,

We would like to begin by thanking you again for all of the work that you do to develop Europe's trading relationships and to advance the health and quality of life of our citizens in these turbulent times. Your positive engagement with Ireland is also greatly appreciated, including as we prepare for our EU Presidency in a few short weeks. For our part, we also wish to start by assuring you of our ongoing support for your efforts.

In the context of the ongoing challenges in the international trading environment including the most recent tariff developments with the US, we felt that it would be useful to highlight again the strategic importance of the life sciences sector and to revisit the idea of a working group or strategic dialogue between the sector, the Commission and those Member States most impacted.

Then Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Tánaiste Simon Harris, wrote to you last year highlighting these issues and supporting the idea of the setting up of a pharmaceutical taskforce. While we are very open as to the exact vehicle and forum for a discussion on these matters, we believe that a substantive dialogue on these issues would be very helpful, notably in light of the US Administration's recent announcements on tariffs on pharmaceuticals, with the EU as well as with other partners, and the ongoing section 232 investigation into the medical devices sector.

European pharma and medical devices companies, as well as US and international companies located in Europe, are at the cutting-edge of research and development, contributing to improving the health of people around the world. These sectors also provide well paid jobs, tax revenues and support enterprise development and job creation in ancillary industries in areas where they are

based, with enormous growth potential in the years ahead. Their activity and productive capacity in Europe also represent important strategic assets for the Union and provide vital economic security in critical medicines and medical devices, as we saw during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

As central pillars of the European economy, dialogue with the sector will also compliment the new One Market Roadmap and wider competitiveness agenda.

There is much we are already doing in relation to the challenges in these sectors, including in relation to the simplification agenda. In this context, we welcome the Commission's proposal for a European Biotech Act and the proposed changes to modernise and simplify the EU's legislative framework for medical devices. These initiatives have been welcomed by industry and will help to foster a more innovation friendly environment for the life-sciences sector in the EU.

Broader simplification of the EU framework through the simplification Omnibus packages are also important in this regard. Changes to the EU rules on AI and the data rulebook through the digital Omnibus package, for example, can help to support innovation and the competitiveness of the life sciences sector. These are all areas, which we intend to actively take forward during our Presidency.

At the same time, we believe that fostering an open dialogue with the sector can ensure that our efforts are most effectively focussed and can best contribute to our economic competitiveness and to the long term well- being of European citizens. The current challenges and instability in the global trading and investment environment require us to be proactive in safeguarding and supporting this strategic, future orientated sector.

Ireland would be keen to contribute positively to a dialogue, alongside other Member States and the life sciences sector. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you both to help take this initiative forward in the period ahead.

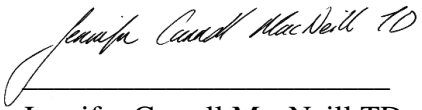
Yours sincerely,



Helen McEntee TD
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade



Simon Harris TD
Tánaiste and Minister for Finance



Jennifer Carroll MacNeill TD
Minister for Health



Peter Burke TD
Minister for Enterprise, Tourism and Employment