



Athens, June 17th 2025

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To
Mr. Maroš Šefčovič
Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security
European Commission

Subject: Reinforcing customs controls on small parcels: The role of Public- Private cooperation in safeguarding the Single Market.

Dear Commissioner,

Following your recent remarks to the European Parliament's Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection (May 20th, 2025), the Hellenic Confederation of Commerce and Entrepreneurship (ESEE) would like to express its support for your commitment to deliver a unified, modern, and effective Customs Union capable to address today's evolving geo-economic and technological challenges.

We understand that the full implementation of the reform is not expected earlier than 2026, and we completely acknowledge the strategic importance of the measures you outlined- notably the establishment of the EU Customs Authority and the EU Customs Data Hub. Yet, market pressures are already mounting in the meantime, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises active in European commerce industry.

Indeed, as you have rightly emphasized, customs are the guardians of the Single Market. However, this market is currently undermined by the lack of effective enforcement of EU rules on imported goods, fostering unfair competition and threatening both consumers' safety and viability of the European commerce. The lack of consistent enforcement of existing rules provides a competitive advantage to global platforms operating outside the EU regulatory framework. The rapid growth of mega e-commerce platforms based in China— driven by state subsidies, artificially low prices, and questionable use of consumer data — has already disrupted the level playing field across the EU retail market.

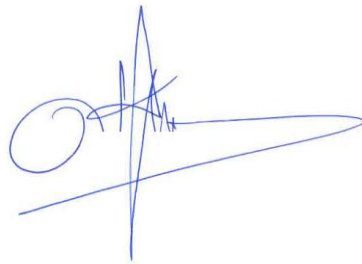
In this context, we believe it is crucial that the establishment and implementation of the new administrative fee, as well as the abolition of the *de minimis* threshold - that until now allows customs-free import of parcels valued up to €150 - will proceed without delay and be enforced no later than 2026. At the same time, it is extremely important to strengthen the operational capacity of customs authorities without delay, focusing particularly on the control of small parcels that are flooding the European

market through online marketplaces based in third countries, especially in Asia. We therefore propose the immediate institutionalization, within 2025, of structured public-private partnership mechanisms for the customs control of small parcels, under a clear regulatory framework and with strong public oversight. This approach - fully aligned with the EU's broader agenda to strengthen its industrial base and promote strategic autonomy in key sectors - could serve as a transitional and complementary mechanism until the planned structural reforms are fully in place.

We also believe it is essential that the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2028–2034) reinforces EU trade policy by providing targeted support to SMEs facing unfair trade practices and market distortions caused by third-country operators.

We would like to assure you that the Greek commerce community stands ready to actively support all EU's efforts towards fair, sustainable and safe e-commerce, and we look forward to working closely with the European Commission for further collaboration and practical implementation proposals.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

Stavros Kafounis
President ESEE