

PRESS RELEASE - for immediate release
Federation of Aluminium Consumers in Europe - FACE
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PRESS RELEASE

FACE ON 2026 STATE OF THE UNION: WELCOMES BOOSTING COMPETITIVENESS & CANADA TIES, BUT URGES IMPLEMENTING EXISTING STRATEGIES OVER NEW ONES

Brussels, 16 September 2026 – FACE welcomes the strong focus placed by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on competitiveness, industrial resilience, energy security and strategic partnerships in her 2026 State of the Union Address.

For EU's aluminium industry, these priorities are particularly relevant. Aluminium - primary and from recycling - is a strategic material for the energy transition and for key value chains across transport, construction, packaging, electrical equipment, defence and advanced manufacturing.

“FACE strongly welcomes the clear recognition that Europe's industrial strength must remain at the heart of the EU's strategic agenda, and recalls the centrality of SMEs” said Mario Conserva, Secretary General of FACE. ***“For energy-intensive industries such as aluminium, competitiveness and decarbonisation must go hand in hand. More than 90% of the industry's workforce are SMEs: without concrete measures that support them, industrial vitality can't be secured within the Union.***

FACE particularly welcomes the emphasis on accelerating electrification, strengthening electricity grids and energy infrastructure, reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens and supporting strategic industrial sectors. These elements are essential to creating the conditions for long-term investment and for ensuring that the green transition strengthens, rather than weakens, the industrial base of the Member States.

“However, adds Conserva, what the EU needs the most is not the cyclical piling up of new strategies, but the resolute implementation of the existing ones: we are very concerned by



the excessively low rate of implementation of the recommendations of the Letta and Draghi reports - which are mutually supportive. How can we trust new policy objectives if the previous ones are neglected?"

FACE also welcomes President von der Leyen's proposal to deepen the strategic relationship between the EU and Canada, including the ambition to open a path for Canada to become the EU's first associate member and to develop an **"Alliance for the Future"**. The initiative envisages closer cooperation in areas including technology, energy, critical raw materials and defence. In the new multipolar world, cooperation between middle and regional powers is essential to maintain equilibrium and functionality in a fragmented international system. Also, Canada and the EU have in common a deep commitment to universal values, international legality and multilateralism. These are more necessary as ever to protect the well-being and cohesion of societies and the primacy of cooperation and solidarity in the international system.

"The proposed strengthening of the EU-Canada relationship is particularly welcome from an industrial perspective," added Mario Conserva. "Canada is an important partner for Europe, and deeper cooperation can contribute to more resilient and diversified supply chains, and stronger investment and trade links. For the aluminium value chain, cooperation with trusted international partners is an important element of Europe's long-term industrial resilience. Europe needs a strong industrial base at home, while the EU also needs strong partnerships abroad," concluded Mario Conserva. "FACE is ready to work constructively with the European Commission, the Member States and other stakeholders to turn these priorities into concrete measures that support SMEs, sustainable competitiveness, energy security, prosperity and strategic resilience."

FEDERATION OF ALUMINIUM CONSUMERS IN EUROPE (FACE)

FACE was founded in 1999 to specifically defend the interests of the EU independent downstream aluminium transformers, users and consumers. Based in Brussels, FACE advocates for the liberalisation of raw materials, protecting the EU's manufacturing base, supporting a rules-based and fair international system with the WTO at its core, and for the global transformation towards a low-carbon economy with aluminium as the ideal material for attaining sustainability goals.

<https://face-aluminium.com/>

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