

PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN STEEL INDUSTRY TO ATTEND LANDMARK STEEL MARCH IN BRUSSELS AGAINST MES FOR CHINA

Brussels, 8 February 2016 – Employers and employees from the entire European steel industry will be attending a march in Brussels on 15 February to show support for fair trade, growth and jobs in Europe, as well as to protest against Chinese dumping on the EU market and the granting of Market Economy Status (MES) for China.

Over 5000 people are expected to attend this march, with several thousand expected to come from the steel sector. The European Steel Association's (EUROFER) announcement that its members would be attending came on the day of the release of a *European Industrial Manifesto* by industry alliance AEGIS Europe.

"We will have colleagues from the steel industry come to Brussels from over 15 EU member states", said Axel Eggert, Director General of EUROFER. "They will be joining thousands of employees, employers and Trade Union representatives from the heights of European industry."

The march is being organised – with EUROFER support – under the umbrella of AEGIS Europe, which is an alliance of 30 European industrial sectors including steel, aluminium, ceramics, glass, solar panels and bicycle manufacturing, among others.

"The march and accompanying manifesto strike at the heart of the challenges facing the European steel industry. We are staunch advocates for free and fair trade. Dumped steel imports from China, volumes of which have doubled in 18 months, are flooding the EU market and directly causing irreversible closures and job losses across the EU steel sector", said Mr Eggert.

Mr Eggert continued, "China has domestic steel overcapacity of around 400 million tonnes, almost three times the total EU steel demand of 155 million tonnes. This overcapacity has arisen as a result of persistent state intervention in the Chinese economy".

"China is quite simply not a market economy. It does not yet meet 4 out of the 5 EU criteria to be considered as such. To prematurely grant MES when China meets neither the EU criteria nor its WTO obligations would be economic and political folly", emphasised Mr Eggert. "It is to demonstrate the strength of feeling amongst employees and employers about the effects of Chinese dumping on European jobs, growth, and environment that we will be marching next week."

Parallel to the issue of MES are the effects of dumping on the objectives of the European Union Emissions Trading System (EU ETS).

"Dumped products from China have much larger environmental footprint – about 50% greater – than equivalents produced in the EU", added Mr Eggert. "They thereby undermine the objectives of the EU ETS to reduce CO2 emissions. The current Commission proposal on the EU ETS post 2020 must therefore guarantee that it does not lead to costs which are not borne by our global competitors, at least at the level of the most efficient plants in Europe. According to a recent study, the proposed EU ETS reform may cost the steel industry alone about €34 billion."

Notes for Editors

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About AEGIS Europe

AEGIS Europe brings together nearly 30 European associations representing a broad variety of industries including traditional industries, consumer branches, SMEs and renewable energy sectors, accounting for more than €500 billion in annual turnover and millions of jobs across the EU. This industry alliance, made up of leaders in sustainable manufacturing and social and environmental responsibility, is committed to European manufacturing as the fundamental driver of innovation, growth and jobs in Europe.

The AEGIS Europe Press Release and *European Industrial Manifesto* are available: [here](#)

About the European steel industry

The European steel industry is a world leader in innovation and environmental sustainability. It has a turnover of around €170 billion and directly employs 330,000 highly-skilled people, producing on average 170 million tonnes of steel per year. More than 500 steel production sites across 24 EU Member States provide direct and indirect employment to millions more European citizens. Closely integrated with Europe's manufacturing and construction industries, steel is the backbone for development, growth and employment in Europe.

Steel is the most versatile industrial material in the world. The thousands of different grades and types of steel developed by the industry make the modern world possible. Steel is 100% recyclable and therefore is a fundamental part of the circular economy. As a basic engineering material, steel is also an essential factor in the development and deployment of innovative, CO₂-mitigating technologies, improving resource efficiency and fostering sustainable development in Europe.