

## Press Release

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# FEDIL'S VIEW ON PRESIDENT VON DER LEYEN'S 2023 STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

*Luxembourg, 14 September 2023.* FEDIL welcomes President von der Leyen's affirmation that the EU industry can rely on her support during their digital and green transition. It appears from her speech that increased attention is being directed toward the EU business and industrial environment, a development long awaited. This attention seems to extend to various contexts, including social dialogue, as well as AI and digital matters. We greatly appreciate this.

FEDIL also considers it appropriate that President von der Leyen recognized three major challenges for EU industry: skills and labour shortages, inflation, and still too high energy prices. We have repeatedly emphasized these points, and this demonstrates that the voice of EU businesses and industries has been heard. Notably, regarding energy prices, it is quite relevant that the Commission's President stated that by staying united, we managed to face this hard challenge better, and that we should replicate this model in other fields like critical raw materials or clean hydrogen. FEDIL has consistently argued that for energy, the only effective response was a unified EU approach, and we are satisfied that the Commission now recognizes this.

FEDIL also appreciates the Commission President's recognition of the existence of bureaucracy and administrative burdens on companies, particularly SMEs that struggle with complex regulations. We support the call to reduce reporting requirements for companies by 25% at the EU level, as emphasized by the President. However, we believe the time has come to translate these words into action. The message of simplifying business in Europe has been echoed by EU policymakers on numerous occasions, and it is now imperative to see concrete implementation.

FEDIL notes with some regret that the Commission's President did not address the EU internal market in her speech. The internal market is of extreme importance for EU competitiveness, especially for smaller member states like Luxembourg. Considering also the apparent lack of commitment of the Commission to safeguarding the internal market in critical legislations, such as the proposal for a Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, the absence of mention in the speech is even more worrying. We strongly urge the

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Commission not to overlook the significance of the internal market and to ensure its continued success.

