
EU Warns of Firm Response to Possible U.S. Trade Breach



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BRUSSELS: The European Commission has warned that the European Union will respond “firmly and proportionately” to any breach of commitments under the EU-United States trade agreement, following Washington’s decision to launch a Section 301 trade investigation involving several economic partners, including the EU.

Speaking at a press briefing Thursday, European Commission Deputy Chief Spokesperson Olof Gill said the Commission is closely reviewing details of the U.S. investigation to assess its potential implications for the existing EU-U.S. trade framework.

Gill said Brussels will also seek further clarification from Washington on how the Section 301 probe may interact with commitments outlined in the joint EU-U.S. statement reached last year.

“The Commission will respond firmly and proportionately to any breach of the joint statement commitments,” Gill said, adding that the EU remains committed to protecting its economic and trade interests.

Under the trade arrangement agreed in July last year, the European Union committed to removing tariffs on U.S. industrial goods and introducing tariff-rate quotas for a range of American agricultural products entering the EU market.

In return, the United States agreed to maintain a 15 percent tariff ceiling on most European goods exported to the American market.