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 Onderwerp: EU industry groups warn that unilateral trade policies hamper coronavirus response

EU industry groups warn that unilateral trade policies hamper coronavirus response



4/10/20, 8:53 PM CET | View in your browser

Ten EU lobby groups representing pharma and medical devices industries, among others, warned EU trade ministers today that trade restrictions and other barriers are making their response to the coronavirus pandemic harder.

"The current increases in zero-sum unilateral trade policies could lead to tit-for-tat policies that hamper the global response to contain Covid-19," <u>wrote</u> the groups, which include branded drugmakers lobby EFPIA, generics lobby Medicines for Europe and MedTech Europe.

They called on EU countries and the European Commission to "lead by example by refraining from imposing export and import restrictions" or other barriers, such as stockpiling requirements, "that will disrupt already stretched global supply chains, both within the EU and with third countries."

The Commission <u>released guidelines</u> this week urging EU members to lift export restrictions on medicines and avoid stockpiling to avoid drug shortages in Europe.

The industry groups called on it and EU members to also engage with countries such as the U.S., India, China, Malaysia and Russia to make sure they also restrain from imposing restrictions.

They demanded the EU asks all countries to eliminate tariffs on medicines and medical and protective equipment, and make it easier to clear customs procedures. The Commission said earlier this month that the bloc would temporarily waive import tariffs on medical equipment.

The EU should also avoid using products needed in the health care sector, such as medicines, textiles, chemicals and equipment, in trade wars with other countries, the lobby groups said.

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