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**“Making a sustainable globalization work for EU citizens”**

**Second Plenary Session of the Conference on the Future of Europe**

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Let me start by joining those who believe that the moment will come when all of us will decide jointly without hesitation that the platform should stay with us after the Conference comes to its conclusion. And my intuition tells me it will further grow.

I would like to use my two minutes to refer to some of the comments I have found on the Platform regarding Europe in the world and specifically the future of our international trade policy.

I see from the platform, but also from the panels, that many of us share the same concerns and ambitions. I agree that the EU must stand ready to further develop its capacity to act more assertively in defending its interests and enforcing its rights globally.

So yes, we will need more effective policy tools to defend our Union and our citizens against hostile trade practices across the world, and there are many of those, and enforce the rights and obligations agreed to with partners in our trade agreements.

But let me immediately add that this increased assertiveness must go hand in hand with our capacity to build alliances with like-minded partners, in particular when it comes to ensuring that global regulatory solutions come from where democracy prevails.

Secondly, the EU must continue to be a staunch defender of the multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization at its core.

If trading rules are applied through a power-based prism, and this risk exists, we risk creating zero-sum games, which would especially hurt weaker economies. Only trade based on rules creates win-win outcomes.

Thirdly, we must spare no effort to ensure a more sustainable and socially fairer globalization that is able to deliver on the expectations of Europeans. Citizens see that trade is at the intersection of many pressing and urgent challenges affecting their everyday life.

So, trade policy has to become a more effective accelerator for positive change.

Finally, EU institutions, but also Member States, our business communities and our civil societies, must better communicate with our citizens about trade. We did not learn our lesson after the failure of the TTIP negotiations. Maybe instead of talking about communication – as a colleague from Croatia said – we should use with more courage to marketing tools.

We have to clearly say that the European Union is here to make sustainable globalization work for us as citizens.