

Joint Statement

between the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy of the Italian Republic and the Minister of Economic Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

On July 17, 2024, we the Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy of the Italian Republic, Adolfo Urso and the Minister of Economic Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Dirk Beljaarts, met in The Hague to discuss bilateral economic relations. Minister Urso's visit to the Netherlands reaffirmed the excellent relations between Italy and the Netherlands. As NATO allies and founding fathers of the European Union, Italy and the Netherlands share the same values and stand side by side to face the great challenges of our time. Our countries' economies mutually enforce each other, with a shared trade volume of more than 48 billion in goods and more than 14 billion euro in services last year. The Ministers discussed semiconductors, business friendly regulation and the EU defense industry.

We, the Ministers, acknowledged the EU Chips Act has led to significant investments, such as the recent investment for chip production in Catania, Italy; or in line with the Chips Act the investment in the Eindhoven-region to facilitate the growth of the sector. This important work needs to continue in a proactive European strategy on semiconductors in order to maintain our technological leadership in this sector and to avoid high-risk strategic dependencies. We need a forward-looking approach that involves the entire semiconductor ecosystem. That way we can make targeted strategic investments that either create more strategic positions in the value chain and build important capabilities that we do not yet have in Europe. Italy and the Netherlands will work together on a positive European agenda.

Considering the increasing importance of European competitiveness, we, the Ministers, highlight the need to unlock the technological and innovation potential of European companies through well-targeted support and after a proper problem analysis at EU and national level to strategic industries and a more efficient, business-friendly regulatory environment across the EU especially for our SME's, which are important for safeguarding a level playing field and a healthy internal market.

On the first aspect we believe that a specific focus should be put on accelerating the mobilization of private funding for our technological markets of the future. On the second aspect we believe that a business-friendly regulatory environment should simplify the reporting obligations, especially for smaller businesses. To achieve this, there is a need to harmonize reporting requirements across legislation and automate reporting and utilize digital solutions in accountability checks.

Furthermore, we should increase insight into the impact of EU legislation to enhance effective implementation and execution, and the role of the European Regulatory Scrutiny Board should be enhanced. In order to avoid unnecessary burdens for the EU enterprises, when a new legislation is created, it should replace or merge within an existing text to uphold the “one in, one out” principle.

The European defense technological and industrial base should be strengthened to reduce our strategic dependencies and to scale up our capacities. We are therefore convinced that with a more inclusive and integrated set up of the European defense market, instead of the current organization around national lines, all Member States will benefit. In the European Defense Industry Programme we have to work together to capitalize on each other’s strengths. Prime and successful contractors from Italy will benefit from Dutch suppliers that provide best value subsystems and components, ensuring redundancy and addressing supply chain risks. Furthermore, the Dutch industry can provide an additional source for components for the Italian industry to meet increasing demand.

Adolfo URSO Minister of Enterprises and Made in Italy of the Italian Republic

Dirk BELJAARTS Minister of Economic Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands