



SPRITSEUROPE LAMENTS MISSED OPPORTUNITY, URGES EU-US TO BREAK DEADLOCK AND SWIFTLY RETURN TO ZERO-FOR-ZERO

Brussels, 21 August 2025 – spiritsEUROPE expresses deep disappointment that today's EU-US joint statement has failed to deliver the long-overdue restoration of the zero-for-zero framework for spirits, leaving EU spirits exports to the US exposed to a 15% import tariff.

"This was a critical moment to reaffirm and reinvigorate our shared commitment to fair and reciprocal trade and give the transatlantic spirits sector the boost it needs to get back on a stronger growth path," said Hervé Dumesny, Director General of spiritsEUROPE. *"While we appreciate the progress made in de-escalating broader trade tensions, every month of delay in restoring the zero-for-zero tariff agreement for spirits holds back growth, investment and consumer choice on both sides of the Atlantic."*

Originally agreed in 1997, the zero-for-zero deal eliminated tariffs on virtually all spirits traded between the EU and the US. It drove a 450% surge in trade over two decades, strengthened cross-investment, and supported thousands of jobs in both markets. Its absence now risks setting back these gains and undermining confidence in the transatlantic partnership.

"We urge both sides to remain at the negotiating table and deliver a swift, full return to zero-for-zero," Dumesny added. *"This means reaffirming the support for our sector across the Atlantic by removing US tariffs on EU spirits and lifting any suspended EU retaliatory measures on US products. Restoring this agreement and predictability in transatlantic spirits trade is essential for enabling our sector to thrive through fair and reciprocal trade that benefits farmers, distillers, retailers, hospitality workers and consumers alike."*

spiritsEUROPE stands ready to work constructively with the European Commission, US counterparts, and industry partners to achieve a durable, balanced, and tariff-free solution that reflects the longstanding spirit of EU-US cooperation in our sector.

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Note to editors

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Background Information:

On 27 July 2025, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and US President Donald J. Trump announced a bilateral agreement on tariffs and trade. As part of its implementation, President Trump signed an Executive Order on 31 July 2025 (accessible [here](#)), establishing a 15% tariff ceiling on imports of EU products into the US.

On 5 August 2025, the EU formally announced a six-month suspension of retaliatory tariffs on U.S. imports, including US spirits, wines, and used barrels. The suspension will remain in place until 5 February 2026.

On 21 August, both sides issued a Joint Statement to provide further details on what was agreed through negotiations (the Joint Statement can be accessed [here](#)). It contains a list of product-specific exemptions from tariffs. Unfortunately, spirits are not part of this list, meaning that EU spirits remain subject to a 15% import tariff in the US. However, the Joint Statement specified that: *“The United States and the European Union agree to consider other sectors and products that are important for their economies and value chains for inclusion in the list of products for which only the MFN tariffs would apply”*. Talks will continue in the coming weeks and months with a view to expanding the list of products benefitting from a tariff exemption.