President Ursula von der Leyen
European Commission
Berlaymont Building
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels
Belgium

27 January 2026

Subject: A Strategic Imperative - the EU-Australia Free Trade Agreement

Dear President von der Leyen,

It was with great interest and optimism that we noted your special address at the World Economic Forum in Davos and your vision for a more independent, resilient Europe that is built on a "Spirit of Dialogue" – choosing partnership over isolation. In an era where global stability is increasingly challenged, it has never been more vital for like-minded democracies to deepen their economic and strategic ties.

In particular, your explicit acknowledgement of the ongoing work toward a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Australia is a welcome signal to businesses, policymakers, and citizens on both sides of the globe who are eager to see this partnership finally reach its full potential.

The European Union and Australia share a bedrock of common values, including a commitment to the rule of law, human rights, and a rules-based international trading system. Australia stands as the last major advanced economy with which the European Union has yet to conclude a comprehensive trade agreement. Closing this gap is not merely a matter of commercial interest; it is a strategic necessity to ensure that democratic alliances remain the engine of prosperity.

Perhaps most pertinent to the European Union's strategic priorities, such as its green and digital transitions, Australia offers a stable, reliable, and transparent source of critical raw materials, including, such as lithium, cobalt, and other critical raw materials, that are essential for European industry to de-risk and diversify supply chains. Australia's emerging leadership in green hydrogen production also offers a significant opportunity for Europe to secure the clean energy required to meet its climate targets. The benefits of Agreement will

be felt across all regions of the European Union, including in Central and Eastern Europe, where businesses are actively seeking trusted partners, diversified markets, and resilient supply chains aligned with EU strategic autonomy objectives.

The long-term strategic gains of an EU-Australia FTA far outweigh any sectoral hurdles that might remain, such as in agricultural producing and geographical indications. We look forward to seeing the "Spirit of Dialogue" translated into a landmark deal that enhances our shared, long-term future.

Australian Business in Europe (ABIE) is an umbrella organisation that represents multiple organisations across Europe with an interest in commercial and business relationships between Australia and Europe, with the shared objective of growing and strengthening trade, investment, business and diplomatic ties between the two regions.

There are currently 15 organisations participating in ABIE, with the following supporting this letter:

- German Australian Business Council e.V.
- Bulgarian Australian Business Council
- Australian Business in Europe Czech Republic
- Australia France Business Association
- Australian Network in Belgium (ANiB)
- ANZCCL (Australia New Zealand Chamber of Commerce Luxembourg)
- Australian New Zealand Spain Business Association
- Australian Swiss Chamber of Commerce
- Australia-UK Chamber of Commerce

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at office@gabc.eu.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Robert Harrison
Member of the Board, Co-Chair
German Australian Business Council e.V.
on behalf of the Australian Business In Europe network (ABIE)

CC: Maroš Šefčovič, Commissioner
Bernd Lange, MEP