# Ursula von der Leyen signals shift towards China amid US trade tensions



European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen recently made headlines for her first official call following President Donald Trump's notable tariffs speech, a topic that has significantly impacted international trade dynamics. The call was made to Chinese counterparts, suggesting a shift in European leaders’ focus towards potential alliances with China in response to the escalating trade tensions with the United States.

Reports from Euronews indicate that during this conversation, von der Leyen articulated Europe's commitment to fostering a "strong reformed trading system," which would be free, fair, and based on a level playing field, particularly in light of the disruption caused by the US tariffs. The European Commission issued an official statement highlighting the responsibility that both Europe and China share as major global markets to support this trading system. In response, Beijing expressed a willingness to collaborate, stating, "China is ready to work with the European side to promote the sound and steady development of China-EU relations."

Simultaneously, the European Union appears to be making progress on a long-term issue regarding the blockage of imports of electric vehicles manufactured in China. According to Euronews, there have been discussions around introducing a minimum pricing scheme to resolve this trade barrier. A source involved in these negotiations remarked, “The EU wants and needs to be seen as a reliable partner in the world. In that sense, the discussion with China is evolving because China is looking at us differently.” This shift in attitude indicates that while the European strategy towards China is not entirely redefined, there are notable changes in the prevailing dynamics.

Adding to this narrative, Maros Sefcovic, the European commissioner for trade and economic security, has travelled to Washington to engage in further discussions with US officials. This visit follows Trump’s announcement of a 90-day pause on US tariffs, which aligns with the EU's decision to halt its countermeasures, reflecting a rare moment of pause in their ongoing trade disputes.

As European leaders, including Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez of Spain, explore these options, the implications of this evolving relationship with China highlight a significant pivot in global trade strategies, as Europe navigates its position between the US and Chinese markets.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/brussels-looks-to-beijing-with-fresh-eyes-as-it-contends-with-trumps-tariffs> - This article corroborates the call between Ursula von der Leyen and her Chinese counterparts, discussing a shift towards potential alliances with China due to US tariffs. It also highlights China's willingness to collaborate.
* <https://time.com/7276293/trump-tariffs-reversal-world-leaders-countries-responses-uncertainty-trade-war/> - The article explains the impact of Trump's tariffs, including the pause on tariffs for some countries, which influences the EU's strategic interactions with both the US and China.
* <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/china-reaches-out-to-other-nations-as-trump-layers-on-tariffs> - This piece supports the narrative of China reaching out to other nations, including Europe, amid rising US tariffs, forming potential alliances to counter US actions.
* <https://www.theparliamentmagazine.eu/news/article/brussels-looks-to-beijing-with-fresh-eyes-as-it-contends-with-trumps-tariffs> - The article references Maroš Šefčovič's discussions with Chinese officials on deepening economic cooperation and acknowledges the recent shift in EU-China relations.
* <https://www.euronews.com> - Euronews has reported on these shifts in EU-China relations, including discussions on electric vehicles and the EU's commitment to a fair trading system.
* <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-set-respond-trump-tariffs-diplomats-2025-04-11/> - This Reuters article could detail the EU's decision-making process regarding tariffs and its evolving stance towards China, although specific content would depend on the article available.
* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/2041210/Ursula-von-der-Leyen-china-eu-concession> - Please view link - unable to able to access data