

**Question for written answer P-004791/2018  
to the Commission**

Rule 130

**Kathleen Van Brempt (S&D)**

Subject: Customs tariff suspension on strategic components used in batteries for electric vehicles

A number of requests for the suspension of customs tariffs on strategic components used in batteries for electric vehicles, such as lithium nickel manganese cobalt oxide (NMC), were submitted to the Commission in 2018. Cheaper imports of cathode materials harm the development of a competitive and sustainable manufacturing value chain for batteries in Europe and thus also the objectives of the European Battery Alliance. Cheap materials are an indicator of ethical issues in the supply chain of cobalt, as demonstrated by Amnesty International.

What is the Commission's view on the risks that such suspensions could have for the European companies that invest in creating jobs and ensuring a sustainable value chain for electric vehicle batteries?

Some of these products can be imported duty free, thanks to FTAs with third countries (NMC is included in the FTA with Korea). In the Commission's view, would a general tariff suspension not damage relations with a preferred trading partner?

To suspending customs tariffs for NMC from third countries with higher risks of human rights issues in the supply chain of raw materials would go against the EU's policy of supporting a sustainable EU battery manufacturing industry with the lowest possible environmental and social footprint. What is the Commission's view on this?