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U.S. OPENS INVESTIGATIONS ON DEPENDENCE ON CHILEAN COPPER IMPORTS

On February 25, 2025, the president of the United States, Donald Trump, signed an executive order to initiate an investigation regarding **the increasing dependence of the United States on copper imports and their derivatives from Chile and other countries** .

The aim of the investigation is, among other things, to assess how this dependence has affected the national security and economic stability of the United States, and **to determine the need to implement trade remedies to safeguard the U.S. copper industry** .

According to the executive order, copper is **an essential raw material for the production of defense equipment and infrastructure in the United States** , as well as for the development of advanced technologies such as clean energy and electric vehicles. Additionally, according to information published on the website of the White House, the U.S. dependence on copper imports **has increased from virtually 0% in 1991 to 45% of consumption in 2024** , which has led to an increase in supply chain security risks.

The investigation covers U.S. imports of the following products of Chilean origin:

- Raw mined copper.
- Copper concentrates.
- Refined copper.
- Copper alloys.
- Scrap copper.
- Derivative products.

The investigation should culminate in a report issued by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, which should be presented to the President within 270 days from the date of the executive order (i.e., by November 22, 2025). The report should address:

- Findings on whether the U.S. dependence on copper imports poses

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a threat to the national security of the country.
• Recommendations on actions to mitigate such threats, including the application of tariffs, export controls, or incentives to increase domestic production.
• Policy recommendations to strengthen the U.S. copper supply chain through strategic investments, permitting reforms, and enhanced recycling initiatives.

Working Group . The Chilean government has indicated that it is monitoring this issue and has created a working group between the Undersecretariat of International Economic Relations (Subrei) in coordination with the Ministry of Finance for this purpose.

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