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## Statement by Ursula VON DER LEYEN, President of the European Commission, candidate for a second mandate 2024-2029: speech by Ursula VON DER LEYEN

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### Summary:

[Ursula VON DER LEYEN, President of the European Commission, candidate for a second mandate 2024-2029, presents her political priorities and outline her vision and plans as Commission President. The statement is followed by a debate with MEPs, in the hemicycle of the European Parliament in Strasbourg.](#)

Only the original language version is authentic and it prevails in the event of its differing from the translated versions.

| TIME     | DESCRIPTION   | DURATION |
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| 00:00:04 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Thank you, Madam President. Dear Roberta. Let me first congratulate you. Let me congratulate you from the bottom of my heart for your renomination. I think your success is a mirror for the outstanding work you've been doing in this House of Democracy.   | 00:00:27 |
| 00:00:31 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, it is now five years since I first came to ask for your confidence. Five years like no other in our Union's history. I will always remember the spine-tingling moments we shared here together in this hemicycle. From standing, of course, in front of you, asking for your confidence five years ago to proposing Next Generation EU. | 00:00:29 |
|          | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I will never forget the appearance of President Zelenskyy at the beginning of the Russian war in Ukraine, when even the translators could   |          |

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| 00:01:00 | not hold back their tears. I will never forget the empty chair left out for Alexei Navalny as his daughter spoke on his behalf, or the moments of silence for those who lost their life in the pandemic, but also the moments of song, the Ode to Joy or Auld Lang Syne. And I will never forget the last words of David Sassoli calling for a new and united Europe.   | 00:00:58 |
| 00:01:58 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable members, choices are the hinges of destiny. And in a world full of adversity, Europe's destiny hinges on what we do next. Despite the momentous things we have done and overcome, Europe now faces a clear choice. A choice which will shape our work for the next five years, but it will also define our place in the world for the next 50.   | 00:00:31 |
| 00:02:29 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, The choice comes down to whether we will be shaped by events and the world around us, or whether we will come together and build our future for ourselves. And that choice is ours.   | 00:00:18 |
| 00:02:47 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Europe cannot control dictators and demagogues across the world, but it can choose to protect its own democracy. Europe cannot determine elections across the world, but it can choose to invest in the security and defence of this continent. Europe cannot stop change, but it can choose to embrace it and invest in a new age of prosperity and improving our quality of life.   | 00:00:34 |
| 00:03:21 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, But Honourable Members, for us to choose the Europe of tomorrow, we must acknowledge how people feel today. We are in a period of deep anxiety and uncertainty for Europeans. Families are feeling the pain from the cost of living and housing. Young people are concerned about the planet, the future and the prospect of war. Companies and farmers are feeling squeezed. And all of this is a symptom of a world in which everything is weaponised and contested, where there is a clear attempt to divide and polarise our societies. | 00:00:47 |
|          | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I am deeply concerned about these trends, but I am convinced that   |          |

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| 00:<br>04:<br>08 | Europe, a strong Europe, can rise to the challenge. And this is why I'm asking you for your confidence today. Because like you, I came into politics to make a difference for all of society to deliver for the generation of my children and grandchildren, like those who came before us, did. And I am convinced that the version of Europe since the end of World War II, with its imperfection and its inequalities, is still the best version in history.  | 00:00:55 |
| 00:<br>05:<br>03 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And I will never stand by and watch it be torn apart from the inside or from the outside. I will never let the extreme polarisation of our societies become accepted. I will never accept that demagogues and extremists destroy our European way of life. And I stand here today ready to lead the fight with all the democratic forces in this House.  | 00:00:36 |
| 00:<br>05:<br>39 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And this is the vision I have set out in my political guidelines, a vision of a stronger Europe that delivers prosperity, that protects people and that defends democracy, a stronger Europe that delivers social fairness and supports people, a stronger Europe that implements what it agrees in a fair way and that sticks to the targets of the European Green Deal with pragmatism, technology-neutrality and innovation. I have listened carefully to the democratic forces in this Parliament, and I am convinced that these guidelines reflect how much we have in common, despite the differences that are healthy in any democracy. | 00:00:49 |
| 00:<br>06:<br>28 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So, Honourable Members, our first priority will be prosperity and competitiveness. In the last five years, we have weathered the fiercest storm in our Union's economic history. We have a much stronger from the shock of lockdowns, and we have overcome an unprecedented energy crisis. We did this together and I believe we can be proud of it. But we also know that our competitiveness needs a major boost.  | 00:00:41 |
| 00:              | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, The fundamentals of the global economy are changing. Those who stand still will fall behind. Those who are not competitive will be dependent. So the race is on and I want Europe to switch  |          |

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| 07:09    | gears. And this starts with making business easier and faster. We need to deepen our single market across the board. We need less reporting, less bureaucracy, more trust, better enforcement, more faster permitting. And I will ensure that we are accountable for this because only what gets measured gets done.  | 00:00:47 |
| 00:07:56 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Therefore, I will task each Commissioner to deep dive in their portfolio and to deliver concretely on burden reduction and I will appoint a Vice-President to coordinate this work and to report on progress to this House once a year. I will introduce a revamped SMEs and competitiveness check as part of our better regulation toolbox. We all know that there is no Europe without small and medium enterprises. They are the heart of our economy and therefore, let's get rid of burdensome micro-management. Let's give them more trust, better incentives. Our SMEs deserve it. | 00:00:44 |
| 00:08:40 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable members, prosperity and competitiveness. Let me give you some figures. In the first half of this year, 50% of our electricity generation came from renewables, home-grown and clean.   | 00:00:21 |
| 00:09:01 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Investments in clean technologies in Europe have more than tripled in this mandate. We attract more investments in clean hydrogen than the United States and China combined.  | 00:00:16 |
| 00:09:17 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, In the last years, we have concluded with global partners 35 new agreements on clean tech, hydrogen and critical raw materials. This is the European Green Deal and Action.   | 00:00:17 |
| 00:09:34 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So I want to be clear. We will stay the course on our growth strategy, and the goals was that were set for 2030 and 2050. Our focus will now be on implementation and investment to make it happen on the ground, and this is why I will put forward a new Clean Industrial Deal in the first 100 days of the next mandate.   | 00:00:28 |
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| 00:<br>10:<br>02 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, It will channel investment in infrastructure and industry, in particular for energy intensive sectors. This will help create lead markets in everything from clean steel to clean tech. It would speed up planning, tendering and permitting. We must be fast and simpler because Europe is decarbonising and industrialising at the same time.   | 00:00:30 |
| 00:<br>10:<br>32 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So our companies need predictability for their investments and their innovation. And yes, they can rely on us. And in this logic, we will enshrine our 90% target for 2040. In our European climate law, our companies need to plan their investment for the coming decade. Already today.  | 00:00:27 |
| 00:<br>10:<br>59 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, But this is not only for business, it's also for business, but not only for business. For young people, children, the teenage of today 2030, 2040, 2050 is just around the corner. They know that we have to reconcile climate protection and a prosperous economy, and they would never forgive us if we do not rise to the challenge. So this is not only a matter of competitiveness, but Honourable Members, this is also a matter of intergenerational fairness. The young people deserve that we act on this one. | 00:00:49 |
| 00:<br>11:<br>48 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, The new clean industrial deal will also help bring down energy bills. We all know that structurally high energy prices hamper our competitiveness, and high energy bills are a major driver of energy poverty of people.  | 00:00:21 |
| 00:<br>12:<br>09 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I have not forgotten how Putin blackmailed us by cutting us off Russian fossil fuels. But we we stood together. We invested massively in home-grown cheap renewables, and this enabled us to break free from dirty Russian fossil fuels. Therefore, Honourable Members together we will ensure that the era of dependency from Russian fossil fuels is over. Once and for all.  | 00:00:52 |
|                  | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate  |          |

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| 00:<br>13:<br>01 | for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members. Europe needs more investment. Be it or industry, farming digital or strategic technologies, but also more investment in people and their skills. This mandate has to be the time of investment. And it starts with completing our capital markets union and mobilising more private funding.   | 00:00:28 |
| 00:<br>13:<br>29 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Every year, &euro;300 billion of European family savings go from Europe to foreign markets because our capital markets are too fragmented. And then this money is often used to buy innovative European companies from abroad and the companies leave. This has to change.  | 00:00:25 |
| 00:<br>13:<br>54 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We need to leverage this enormous wealth to create growth here in Europe. And this is why we will propose a European Savings and Investments Union.   | 00:00:14 |
| 00:<br>14:<br>08 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, European should not need to look at the United States or Asia to finance the expansion. They must find what they need to grow right here in Europe. So we need a deep and liquid capital market, and we need a competition policy that supports companies to scale up. Europe must be again the home of opportunity and of innovation.  | 00:00:37 |
| 00:<br>14:<br>45 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And Honourable Members to unleash private investment, we also need public funding. Yes, we have the resources of Next Generation EU and the current budget, but this will come to an end within the next years. While our investment needs will not. Our new budget will be reinforced. We need more investment capacity. It must be more focussed on policy, simpler for Member States and more impactful, so that we can use its power to leverage more private and public financing. | 00:00:39 |
| 00:              | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And I will propose a new European Competitiveness Fund. It will be focussed on common and cross-border European projects that will drive competitiveness and innovation, notably to support   |          |

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| 15:<br>24        | the clean industrial deal. It will ensure that we develop strategic tech and manufacture right here in Europe, from AI to clean tech, the future of our prosperity must be made in Europe. That is clear and this is something we really have to press on.  | 00:00:44 |
| 00:<br>16:<br>08 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, we must also invest more in our security and defence. Russia is still on the offensive in eastern Ukraine. They are banking on a war of attrition, on making the next winter even harsher than the last. Russia is banking on Europe and the West going soft, and some in Europe are playing along.   | 00:00:33 |
| 00:<br>16:<br>41 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Two weeks ago, a European Union Prime Minister went to Moscow. This so-called peace mission was nothing but an appeasement mission. This was a plain appeasement mission.   | 00:00:54 |
| 00:<br>17:<br>35 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Only two days later, Putin's jets aimed their missiles at a children's hospital and maternity ward in Kyiv. And we all saw the images of children covered with blood. We saw the mothers trying to bring young cancer patients to safety. That strike was not a mistake. It was a message, a chilling message from the Kremlin to all of us.                                  | 00:00:29 |
| 00:<br>18:<br>04 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So, Honourable Members, our answer has to be just as clear. No one wants peace more than the people of Ukraine, a just and lasting peace for a free and independent country. And Europe will stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. This is our message.  | 00:00:42 |
| 00:<br>18:<br>46 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, we must give Ukraine everything it needs to resist and emerge victorious. These means that in our future, for the very first time, our liberty is at stake. We are responsible and we must do everything we can to protect European citizens, to protect Europe. It is our duty. And so I do believe it is now time to build a veritable Union of defence. | 00:00:58 |

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| <p>00:<br/>19:<br/>44</p> | <p>SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I do know that some may not feel at ease and comfortable with this idea. But what should make us uneasy are the threats to our security. Let us be clear: Member remains States remain responsible for their national security and for their armies. NATO is the pillar of our collective defence architecture. But we all know that spending on defence is too low and ineffective, too dependent on foreign powers.</p>  | <p>00:00:26</p> |
| <p>00:<br/>20:<br/>10</p> | <p>SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So, we need to build a single market for defence. We need to invest more in high level capacity building. And this means that Europe needs to move forward along the Versailles declaration pathway. We need to invest more and we need to invest together. We must build common European projects. For example, a complete Air Defence system, an European Air Shield. Not only to protect our airspace, but also to send a clear and strong signal of unity, a European unity in the field of defence.</p> | <p>00:00:54</p> |
| <p>00:<br/>21:<br/>04</p> | <p>SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, security is not only about external threats. Cyber and hybrid threats are growing. Organised criminal networks are infiltrating our economy. Most of them use corruption. They are causing fear and innocent people's deaths with a brutal violence. They earn enormous amounts of money from drug trafficking, ransomware, fraud, trafficking in human beings, and they are not limited by national borders.</p>   | <p>00:00:41</p> |
| <p>00:<br/>21:<br/>45</p> | <p>SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So it's necessary that we respond to this growing threat on a European level. We must make sure that police can work across Europe without borders. That is why I will propose to double Europol's staff and strengthen its mandate. I want Europol to become a truly operational police agency.</p>  | <p>00:00:32</p> |
| <p>00:<br/>22:<br/>17</p> | <p>SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And we must also do more to secure our external borders. Our eastern border in particular has become a target for hybrid attacks and provocations. Russia is luring migrants from Yemen up north, exploiting their misery and pushing them deliberately against the Finnish border.</p>   | <p>00:00:25</p> |



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| 00:22:42 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We should always keep in mind a member states' border is a European border, and we will do everything we can to make them stronger.  | 00:00:11 |
| 00:22:53 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And this is part of the reason why we must strengthen Frontex to make it more effective, while fully respecting fundamental rights. I will propose to triple the number of European border and coast guards to 30,000.   | 00:00:25 |
| 00:23:18 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, More secure borders will also help us to manage migration in a more structured and fair way. The Migration and Asylum Pact is a huge step forward.   | 00:00:14 |
| 00:23:32 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We put solidarity at the heart of our common response. Migration challenges need a European response with a fair and firm approach based on our values. Always remembering that migrants are human beings like you and me and all of us. We are protected by human rights. | 00:00:26 |
| 00:23:58 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I know that many pessimists thought that migration was too divisive to agree on, but we proved them wrong. Together, we made it, and we have a much stronger for it.   | 00:00:11 |
| 00:24:09 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Now we must collectively focus on implementation and support Member States in making it a reality on the ground. And there will be more to do.   | 00:00:13 |
| 00:24:22 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We need a common approach on returns to make them more effective and dignified, and we need to develop our comprehensive partnerships, in particular across our Southern Neighbourhood.  | 00:00:14 |
|          | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate   |          |

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| 00:24:36 | for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, The Mediterranean region should get undivided attention, and this is why I will appoint a Commissioner for the region and propose a new agenda for the Mediterranean, together with Kaja Kallas. Because the future of those two Mediterranean shores is one and the same.  | 00:00:30 |
| 00:25:06 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, our neighbourhood is home to our future too. Inviting countries into our Union is a moral, a historical and political responsibility. It is an enormous geostrategic responsibility for Europe.  | 00:00:21 |
| 00:25:27 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Because in today's world, a larger Union will be a stronger Union. It will strengthen our voice in the world. It will help reduce our dependencies, and it will ensure that democracy, prosperity and stability spread across Europe.  | 00:00:19 |
| 00:25:46 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We will support candidates by working on investment and reform and integrating them, where we can, into our legal framework.   | 00:00:10 |
| 00:25:56 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Accession will always be a merit based process, and we will ensure that all countries are ready before joining. But completing our Union is also in our own core interest, and it will be a core priority for my Commission.   | 00:00:21 |
| 00:26:17 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I'm deeply convinced history is calling again. The Western Balkans, Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia have made their free choice. They have chosen freedom over oppression. They have chosen democracy over dependency. And some of them are paying a very high price for this choice. | 00:00:29 |
| 00:26:46 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So we must do our choice too and show steadfast commitment that their future will be free, will be prosperous, and will be in our European Union.   | 00:00:19 |

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| 00:<br>27:<br>05 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, Europe has a responsibility to play an active role in the world, starting in our neighbourhood, and in particular in the Middle East. I want to be very clear. The bloodshed in Gaza must stop now. Too many children, women and civilians have lost their lives as a result of Israel's response to Hamas brutal terror. The people of Gaza cannot bear anymore, and humanity cannot bear anymore. We need an immediate and enduring cease fire. We need the release of Israeli hostages, and we need to prepare for the day after.                            | 00:01:10 |
| 00:<br>28:<br>15 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, 'Europe must play its part. We have massively increased our humanitarian aid to almost €200 million in 2024. And we will do more. We are now working on a much larger, multi-year package to support an effective Palestinian Authority. The two-State solution is the best way to ensure security for both, to Israelis and Palestinians and people in the Middle East deserve peace, security and prosperity. And Europe will stand by their side.  | 00:00:43 |
| 00:<br>28:<br>58 | 'SOUNDBITE (German), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, Europe offers a unique quality of life. From comprehensive social security to first-class local food. Rapeseed fields, vineyards and orchards not only mean good food and drink, but they are part of our homeland. And that is why the future of agriculture is such an important and sensitive issue for us in Europe.   | 00:00:37 |
| 00:<br>29:<br>35 | 'SOUNDBITE (German), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We must manage to overcome differences and develop good solutions together with everyone involved. That's why I launched the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of Agriculture in Europe. It brings together farmers, environmental groups and experts from the entire food chain. I promised to listen carefully and learn from them. And I do. I will take up good recommendations and present a new European strategy for our agriculture and food sector. I will work to ensure that farmers have a fair income. No one should be forced to sell good food below production costs. | 00:01:14 |
|                  | 'SOUNDBITE (German), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate   |          |

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| 00:<br>30:<br>49 | for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We must strengthen the position of our farmers in the value chain of the food industry. And we need smarter incentives, more innovation and access to capital. Anyone who treats nature and biodiversity sustainably and helps to bring the CO2 balance into balance must be appropriately compensated for it. Our farmers shape our landscapes. They shape the face of Europe. They are part of our culture. They ensure food security. And we are proud of them.   | 00:00:50 |
| 00:<br>31:<br>39 | 'SOUNDBITE (German), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, That's why we have to work together to tackle the problems that weigh on them. They feel climate change. Extreme weather and water shortages are affecting them more and more every year. Europe is warming twice as fast as the global average. We are already seeing the devastating effects in fields and forests. The face of our rural communities is changing. We need to do more to better prepare agriculture for what lies ahead as a result of climate change. That is why I will present a plan for agriculture to cope with the necessary adaptation to climate change and, in parallel, a strategy for the sustainable use of the precious resource water. Not only our food security depends on it, but also our overall competitiveness. | 00:01:07 |
| 00:<br>32:<br>46 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, our quality of life and our very social fabric are unique. We made historic steps forward on our pillar of social rights, with minimum wages to the first ever child guarantee, just to name a few. During the pandemic, we saved 40 million jobs with sure and we can be very proud of it.  | 00:00:28 |
| 00:<br>33:<br>14 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, 'But many new challenges have emerged from the impact of AI, mental health at work and new drivers of poverty. So, we need a new action plan for the implementation of the pillar. We must ensure fair transitions and good working conditions for workers and self-employed people. And crucial for that is social dialogue. The hallmark of our social market economy.   | 00:00:34 |
|                  | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We will therefore work to increase collective bargaining and strengthen the European dialogue, and we will address those issues that   |          |

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| 00:<br>33:<br>48 | Europeans feel the most in their daily lives. Take housing. Europe faces a housing crisis, with people of all ages and families of all sizes affected. Prices and rents are soaring. People are struggling to find affordable homes. This is why, for the first time, I will appoint a Commissioner with a direct responsibility for the topic of housing.  | 00:00:53 |
| 00:<br>34:<br>41 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We will develop a European affordable housing plan to look at all the drivers of the crisis, and to help unlock private and public investment needed. Typically, housing is not seen as a European issue. Some might say we should not get involved, but I want this Commission to support people where it matters most and if it matters to Europeans, then it matters to Europe. | 00:00:39 |
| 00:<br>35:<br>20 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, this is how we can strengthen our society. This means ensuring that every region in every part of Europe is supported. No one is left behind.  | 00:00:12 |
| 00:<br>35:<br>32 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I am committed to a strong cohesion policy designed together with regions and local authorities. I want Europe to be the best place to grow up in, and the best place to grow old in.  | 00:00:17 |
| 00:<br>35:<br>49 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We must enable young people to make the most of Europe's freedom from a stronger Erasmus Plus to more citizens engagement. But we must also protect young people.  | 00:00:14 |
| 00:<br>36:<br>03 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Childhood and teenage years are the time when our characters formed. Our personality develops. Our brain is shaped by triggers and emotions. So this is an amazing time of development, but also time of real vulnerability.   | 00:00:20 |
| 00:<br>36:<br>23 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And we see more and more reporting on what some call a mental health crisis. I believe that social media and excessive screen time and addictive practices have played their part.   | 00:00:18 |

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| 00:<br>36:<br>41 | 'SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, But I must tell you, my heart bleeds when I read about young people harming themselves or even taking their lives because of online abuse. I think of those last moments and the pain they must have felt. I think of their parents and their friends and this is devastating.  | 00:00:20 |
| 00:<br>37:<br>01 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, So, Honourable Members, we can never accept this in our society. We will tackle the plague of cyber bullying. We will take action against addictive design of some platforms, and we will convene the first ever European-wide inquiry on the impact of social media on the well-being of young people. We owe it to them and we will not rest until we have done right by them.   | 00:00:36 |
| 00:<br>37:<br>37 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And Honourable Members. One of the most fundamental choices we face is exactly what kind of societies we want for our children and grandchildren, and in particular for our daughters and granddaughters.  | 00:00:15 |
| 00:<br>37:<br>52 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, On women's rights, we have achieved together the unthinkable. Thanks to the amazing solidarity in this house of European democracy across all party lines. After ten years of struggle, we have unblocked the Women on Boards directive.   | 00:00:20 |
| 00:<br>38:<br>12 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, We have achieved huge progress on pay transparency. And let me tell you, there is not the slightest argument and reason why women should get paid less for the same work than men.   | 00:00:23 |
| 00:<br>38:<br>35 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, But, there is still so much to do. Stop the rise in violence against women. Reconcile care and career. Actually not only for women, but women are mostly affected. Close the pay and pensions gap because it is no coincidence that poverty in old age has a female face, and there's so much more to do. So, let's work together to develop a roadmap for women's rights. Let's keep moving forward. If not now, when then? | 00:00:43 |
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| 00:<br>39:<br>18 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable Members, democracy is a shared treasure. It is the frame within which all our differences and diversity can express itself. And that frame is fragile as it is precious. For too long we took it for granted. We got too comfortable in our democracy. But, today our democracies are threatened. We've seen a ground war in Ukraine for over two years now. And across the Union and within our institutions, our services and journalists. And I wish to thank them for their work today. | 00:00:58 |
| 00:<br>40:<br>16 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Uncovering cyberattacks, espionage, corruption, disinformation campaigns carried out by foreign actors, specifically Chinese and Russian actors. Never in the recent decades have I seen as high a level of hybrid attacks and cyberattacks within the European Commission. We are fully aware of this situation and are acting in a responsible way for several years now.  | 00:00:33 |
| 00:<br>40:<br>49 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, A huge work of analysis been carried out, and we have established effective tools together with the Member States. But we must go further. We must stop hostile foreign actors from interfering in our democratic processes, to undermine them from within, in order to destroy them.  | 00:00:31 |
| 00:<br>41:<br>20 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And in order to do this, we must take strong and decisive measures within Europe. If you place your trust in me today, the Commission will propose a European democracy shield.  | 00:01:16 |
| 00:<br>42:<br>36 | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, It's crucial that we give the European Union the tools that can fight cyber attacks, to impose transparency of foreign funding of our public life as a common rule and a reliable framework for the provision of information. And in order to do this, we must support independent journalism.   | 00:00:36 |
| 00:              | SOUNDBITE (French), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, The Union must continue to respect, ensure that we respect the rules of the digital world and continue to support media literacy   |          |

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| 43:<br>12        | programmes. We can have a more lively democracy, a participative democracy that is alive. And I know I can count on your support to make this grand plan for the defence of European democracy come to life.   | 00:00:31 |
| 00:<br>43:<br>43 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, But we will also step up our work on defending all parts of our democracy. We will protect free media and civil society. The rule of law and the fight against corruption will be at the heart of our work. We will strengthen all tools and we will step up our enforcement. We will ensure that our Rule of Law Reports focus on the single market dimension to help protect companies. And we will keep a very clear principle in our budget. Respecting the rule of law is a must for EU funds in this budget and in future. | 00:00:59 |
| 00:<br>44:<br>42 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And Honourable Members, progress is a constant work we have to do. We need an ambitious reform agenda. To ensure the functioning of a larger union and to increase democratic legitimacy. While reforms were necessary before, with enlargement, they become indispensable. So, we must use this as a catalyst for change in terms of our capacity to act. Our policies and our budget.  | 00:00:34 |
| 00:<br>45:<br>16 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, And we will, of course, focus on what we can already do. And this is a lot, but we should be more ambitious. I believe we need treaty change, which can improve our Union. And I want to work on that with this House. And this will be part of a closer partnership between the Commission and the Parliament. I have listened to your demands and concerns.  | 00:00:34 |
| 00:<br>45:<br>50 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, I continue to support your right of initiative, and we will increase our cooperation on Article 225 Resolutions to ensure we will follow up. We need to revise the framework agreement to ensure more transparency, more accountability, more presence in the Parliament. When all institutions work together and move together. Europe moves forward.   | 00:00:29 |
|                  | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Honourable   |          |



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| 00:<br>46:<br>19 | Members, to finish. At the start of his second mandate, Jacques Delors said, "Our community is not merely the fruit of history and necessity, but also of will". This is a fundamental choice that we face. History is keeping knocking at our doors. The need for Europe will be stronger than ever. Our determination has to match. That is what has brought our continent together, not the inscrutable forces of fate, but the power of people striving for more.                   | 00:00:45 |
| 00:<br>47:<br>04 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Like the three prisoners on Ventotene Island in the 40s, who laid out a vision of a united continent. And, like the post-war generation, who built peace on coal and steel. People who stood unarmed in the face of Soviet tanks, who put carnations into rifles and tore down a wall with their bare hands. People who still risked their life today for this dream called Europe. | 00:00:31 |
| 00:<br>47:<br>35 | SOUNDBITE (English), Ursula VON DER LEYEN, Candidate for the Commission Presidency for 2024 - 2029, Generation after generation, have made Europe, have chosen a strong Europe. And now that responsibility is up on us. The last five years we have shown what we can do when we work together. So let's do it again. Let us make the choice of strength. Let us make the choice of leadership. Let us make the choice of Europe. Thank you very much and long live Europe.            | 00:00:30 |
| 00:<br>48:<br>05 | End   | 00:00:05 |

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