



Request for observing the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), updating and expanding its product coverage



Cologne, 22 September 2010



The industry associations engaged in IT products such as digital cameras would like to request the European Union (EU):

1) to fairly observe the concessions granted by the EU following the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) pursuant to which the EU committed to eliminate import duties on all Information Technology (IT) products listed in the Annexes to the ITA.



2) not to arbitrarily and unilaterally adopt classification measures concerning IT products which result in the application of dutiable treatment on those products.



3) to consult with all other ITA member states and regions in view of realizing the EU's proposal to update and to expand product coverage of the ITA.

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On 16 August 2010, the WTO issued its Panel Report on the dispute brought by United States (US), Japan and Taiwan concerning the tariff treatment granted by the EU to digital multi-function machines, flat-panel displays and set-top boxes. The dispute was brought to the WTO Dispute Settlement Body after the request for formal consultations made by US and Japan on 28 May 2008, and later joined by Taiwan, failed to reach a satisfactory solution. The Panel Report supported all claims from the complainants and confirmed that the EU infringes the ITA by imposing duties on the above products. Therefore, the Panel ordered the EU to bring the relevant measures into conformity with its obligations under the GATT 1994 and to ensure the duty-free treatment of the above products.





We welcome and support the Panel Report since we believe it confirms that the EU has acted inconsistently with their WTO obligations in their Customs administration area for a very long time.

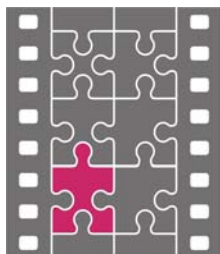


In parallel with the above developments, on 15 September 2008, the EU presented the WTO with a proposal to update and expand the product coverage of the ITA taking account of rapid technological innovation and convergence. The EU proposal was a positive development and raised our expectations. However, we understand that no progress has been made to date on this proposal.



SYNDICAT DES ENTREPRISES DE L'IMAGE
DE LA PHOTO ET DE LA COMMUNICATION

Therefore, we would like to request the EU to immediately implement a positive and constructive consultation with all other ITA member states and regions to realize the EU proposal, while complying with the ITA, and promoting steady economic growth of the worldwide free trade.



We will also keep paying our most careful attention to ensure that any proposal to re-negotiate the ITA does not invalidate the concessions already granted to IT products.



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1. Asociacia Dovozcov Audiovizualnej Techniky (ADAT, Slovakia), 2. Associazione Italiana Foto & Digital Imaging (AIF, Italy), 3. Associacao Empresarial das Sectores Electrico, Electrodomestico, Fotografico e Electronico (AGEFE, Portugal), 4. Asociatia Producatorilor si Distribuitorilor de Echipamente de Tehnologie Informatiei si comunicatiilor (APDE TIC, Romania), 5. Bulgarian Association of Information Technologies (bait, Bulgaria), 6. Camera & Imaging Products Association (CIPA, Japan), 7. Elektronik Branschen (Sweden), 8. Elektronikkbransjen (Norway), 9. Elektroniikan Tukkukauppiat ry (ETK ry, Finland) 10. Fotobranschens Leverandorforening (Denmark), 11. Association of the Hungarian Representatives of the Photo machineries Manufacturers (FOTOMKE, Hungary), 12. International Imaging Industry Association (i3a, USA), 13. Photo Imaging Council (pic, UK), 14. Photoindustrie-Verband e.V. (PIV, Germany), 15. photo & imaging association (PIA, Belgium / Luxemburg), 16. Photo Marketing Association International (PMA, USA), 17. Greek Manufacturers, Distributors & Dealers of Photo Products and Image Systems Association (SEKAF, Greece), 18. Syndicat des Entreprises de L'image de la Photo et de la Communication (SIPEC, France), 19. Photographic Arts Federation of Turkey (TFSF, Turkey) , 20. ZIPSEE (Poland)
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