



Global Industry Statement on the WTO Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions

The undersigned associations urge WTO members to support continuation of the Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions at the WTO's Thirteenth Ministerial Conference (MC13).

Allowing the Moratorium to expire would be a historic setback for the WTO, representing an unprecedented termination of a multilateral agreement in place nearly since the WTO's inception – an agreement that has allowed the digital economy to take root and grow. All WTO members have a stake in the organization's continued institutional credibility and resilience, as well as its relevance at a time of unprecedented digital transformation.

Continuation of the Moratorium is critical to the ongoing COVID-19 recovery. As detailed by the United Nations, the World Bank, the OECD, and many other organizations, the cross-border exchange of knowledge, technical know-how, and scientific and commercial information across transnational IT networks, as well as access to digital tools and global market opportunities have helped sustain economies, expand education, and raise global living standards.

Continuation of the Moratorium is also important to supply chain resilience for manufacturing and services industries. Manufacturers – both large and small, and across a range of industrial sectors – rely on the constant flow of research, design, and process data and software to enable their production flows and supply chains for critical products.

The Moratorium is particularly beneficial to Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs), whose ability to access and leverage digital tools has allowed them to stay in business amidst physical restrictions and lockdowns. Failure to renew the Moratorium will jeopardize these benefits, as customs restrictions that interrupt cross-border access to knowledge and digital tools will harm MSMEs and the global supply chain – increasing digital fragmentation. As [UNCTAD](#) has explained, such fragmentation “reduces market opportunities for domestic MSMEs to reach worldwide markets, [and] ... reduces opportunities for digital innovation, including various missed opportunities for inclusive development that can be facilitated by engaging in data-sharing through strong international cooperation. ... [M]ost small, developing economies will lose opportunities for raising their digital competitiveness.”

The risks of ending the Moratorium have been discussed in recent publications by the [International Monetary Fund](#), [OECD](#), [World Bank](#), [United Nations](#), and [WTO](#), and by think-tanks in [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Switzerland](#), [Belgium](#), and [around the world](#). As the [OECD](#) has explained, “[t]he overall revenue implications of the Moratorium are small..., [t]ariffs on electronic transmissions would hit low-income country trade the most... Smaller and women-owned firms could be most impacted...” [Other reports](#) predict greater GDP losses due to potential implementation of retaliatory duties and note that goods and services taxes (GST) / value added taxes (VAT) are preferable to tariffs both from the perspectives of revenue collection, economic efficiency, and administrability. Countries that impose such duties also face longer-term harms due to a less predictable investment climate, reduced foreign direct investment, and reduced access to knowledge, information, and digital tools needed by local workers, artists, patients, students, consumers, and other constituents.

Finally, at a time when [the G20](#), seeking to establish “a more stable and fairer international tax system,” has formally endorsed the [OECD Inclusive Framework's Solution to Address the Tax Challenges Arising from the Digitalisation of the Economy](#), it seems unnecessarily disruptive for the WTO membership to abandon a foundational quarter-century old agreement regarding the treatment of electronic transmissions. We also note in this regard the [G7 Digital Trade Principles](#), which state that “[e]lectronic transmissions – including the transmitted content – should be free of customs duties, in accordance with the WTO Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions.”

We therefore urge all WTO members to show strong leadership and support of the digital economy by supporting continuation of the WTO Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions.

Sincerely,



1. ACTI - Asociación Chilena de Empresas de Tecnologías de Información
2. Africa Cloud Association
3. Africa Information and Communication Technologies Alliance (AfICTA)
4. Alianza del Pacífico
5. Allied for Startups
6. American Chamber of Commerce in Australia
7. American Chamber of Commerce in Chile
8. American Chamber of Commerce in Malaysia
9. American Chamber of Commerce in New Zealand
10. American Chamber of Commerce in Peru
11. American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore
12. American Chamber of Commerce in Spain
13. American Chamber of Commerce to the EU
14. AMETIC La Voz de la Industria Digital
15. ACT | The App Association
16. Asia Business Trade Association
17. Asia Cloud Computing Association
18. Asia Internet Coalition
19. Asia Pacific MSME Trade Coalition (AMTC)
20. Asia Pacific Services Coalition
21. Asociación de Internet MX
22. Asociación Latinoamericana de Exportadores de Servicios (ALES)
23. Associação Brasileira das Empresas de Software (ABES)
24. Association of Competitive Telecom Operators (ACTO) (India)
25. AusFilm
26. Australasian Performing Rights Association / Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Association (APRA AMCOS)
27. Australian Information Industry Association
28. Australian Industry Group
29. Australian Services Roundtable
30. Autos Drive America
31. BDI The Voice of German Industry
32. Belize Coalition of Service Providers (BCSP)
33. Bitkom e.V.
34. Brazilian National Confederation of Industry
35. British Chamber of Commerce Kenya
36. Broadband India Forum (BIF)
37. BSA | The Software Alliance
38. Business Alliance for Customs Modernization
39. Business Council of Canada
40. Business Europe
41. Business NZ
42. Business Roundtable
43. Câmara Brasileira da Economia Digital
44. Cámara Colombiana de Comercio Electrónico
45. Canadian Chamber of Commerce
46. Cámara de Comercio de Lima - CCL
47. Cámara de Industrias de Costa Rica
48. Cámara de Infocomunicación y Tecnología (INFOCOM)
49. Canadian Services Coalition (CSC)
50. Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry [S. Africa]
51. Caribbean Network of Services Coalition
52. Center for International Economic Collaboration (CFIEC)
53. Chamber of Digital Industry and Services of National Business Association of Colombia – ANDI
54. China Council for Promotion of Int'l Trade
55. China Semiconductor Industry Association (CSIA)
56. City of London Corporation
57. Coalition for Digital Prosperity for Asia
58. Coalition of Services Industries (CSI)
59. Computer and Communications Industry Association (CCIA)
60. Consumer Technology Association (CTA)
61. Copyright Overseas Promotion Association (COA) (South Korea)
62. Costa Rican Chamber of Information and Communication Technologies (CAMTIC)
63. DIGITALEUROPE
64. Digital Trade Network
65. Dominican Republic Services Association
66. Ecommerce Forum Africa
67. Emerging Business Factory (Morocco)
68. Entertainment Software Association
69. EU-ASEAN Business Council
70. European Chamber of Commerce in Indonesia
71. European Chamber of Commerce in Thailand
72. EuroCommerce
73. European Services Forum (ESF)
74. European Semiconductor Industry Association (ESIA)

75. Federation of Korean Information Industries (FKII)
76. Forum for Internet Retailers, Sellers and Traders of India
77. Global Data Alliance
78. Global Trade Solutions (South Africa)
79. Grenada Coalition of Service Industries (GCSI)
80. Hong Kong Coalition of Services Industries
81. India Electronics & Semiconductor Association (IESA)
82. INDIA SME FORUM
83. Independent Film & Television Alliance (IFTA)
84. Indonesia Services Dialogue (ISD)
85. Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)
86. Interactive Games and Entertainment Association (IGEA) (Australia)
87. The International Association of Scholarly, Technical and Medical Publishers (STM)
88. International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
89. International Generic and Biosimilar medicines Association (IGBA)
90. IP Federation (United Kingdom)
91. Japan Business Council in Europe (JBCE)
92. Japan Electronics and Information Technology Industries Association (JEITA)
93. Japan Information Technology Service Industry Association (JISA)
94. Japan Machinery Center for Trade and Investment (JMC)
95. Japan Semiconductor Industry Association (JSIA)
96. Japan Services Network (JSN)
97. Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand
98. Kenya Private Sector Alliance
99. Korea International Trade Association
100. Korea Semiconductor Industry Association
101. Korean Broadcasters Association
102. Korean Film Digital Distribution Association
103. La Chambre de Commerce d'Industrie et d'Agriculture de Saint-Louis (Sénégal)
104. La Conférence permanente des chambres consulaires et organisations intermédiaires africaines et francophones (Cpccaf)
105. Malaysian Service Providers Confederation (MSPC)
106. Malaysia Semiconductor Industry Association
107. Mexican Business Council for Foreign Trade, Investment and Technology
108. Mexican Chamber of Electronics, Telecommunications and Information Technologies (CANIETI)
109. Motion Picture Association (MPA)
110. Motion Picture Distributors Association of Australia (MPDAA)
111. Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan
112. National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
113. National Association of Cinema Operators – Australasia (NACO)
114. National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC)
115. New Zealand International Business Forum
116. Philippine Exporters Confederation (PHILEXPORT)
117. Professional & Business Services Council
118. Papua New Guinea Chamber of Commerce and Industry
119. Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)
120. Saint Lucia Coalition of Services Industries (SLCSI)
121. Saint Kitts & Nevis Coalition of Services Industries (SKNCSI)
122. Semiconductor & Electronics Industries in the Philippines Foundation, Inc. (SEIPI)
123. Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA)
124. Screen Producers Australia (SPA)
125. SGTECH
126. Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council
127. SPADA NZ – The Screen Production and Development Association
128. Singapore Business Federation
129. Singapore Semiconductor Industry Association (SSIA)
130. Sociedad de Comercio Exterior del Perú (ComexPerú)
131. Sociedad de Fomento Fabril (SOFOFA)
132. Taiwan Coalition of Services Industries (TWCSI)
133. Taiwan Semiconductor Industry Association (TSIA)
134. techUK
135. TECHNATION Canada
136. Technical Service Providers Association of South Africa
137. Technology Trade Regulation Alliance (TTRA)
138. Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA)
139. TheCityUK
140. Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries
141. Unión Costarricense de Cámaras y Asociaciones del Sector Empresarial Privado (UCCAEP)
142. US-ASEAN Business Council
143. US-Bangladesh Business Council
144. US Chamber of Commerce
145. US Council for International Business
146. US-India Business Council
147. US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF)
148. US Information Technology Office (China)
149. Vietnam E-commerce Association (VECOM)
150. World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)