



PRESS STATEMENT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CompTIA welcomes US and Japan ITA trade complaint to the WTO

The following statement may be attributed to Hugo Lueders, Group Director Public Policy EMEA for the Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA):

Brussels, 30 May, 2008 – CompTIA welcomes today's joint US and Japan legal action at the WTO to formally raise a longstanding ICT trade policy issue on the Information Technology Agreement (ITA).

"The ICT industry believes in free and open trade, and arbitrary tariffs on information technology products harm our industry's interests everywhere; in the EU, the US and third-countries. Above all, consumers and small and medium-sized business users of ICT products pay twice for these non-compliant tariffs – either directly, through the costs that these tariffs add to existing products, or indirectly, by thwarting the flow of technological innovation that businesses demand".

The ITA was originally negotiated to avoid this, placing zero-tariffs on a broad array of productivity-enhancing technology exports, with the clear recognition that such technology will certainly undergo enhancements, yet still qualify for zero-tariff treatment.

This complaint presents a great opportunity for the EU to reject short-sighted temptations to hide behind protectionist tariffs. Or, as EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson so aptly stated, "We cannot argue for openness from others while sheltering behind barriers of our own"!

Lueders emphasized, "We hope an expeditious accommodation can be reached between the US, Japan and the EU on this important trade policy matter – one that will uphold the full flexibility and applicability of the ITA".

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About The Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA): CompTIA is a global Industry association representing the business interests of the information technology industry. For more than 26 years CompTIA has provided research, networking and partnering opportunities to its 22,000 members in 102 countries. The association is involved in developing standards and best practices, and influencing the political, economic and educational arenas that impact ICT worldwide see: www.comptia.eu