



## **STATEMENT ON WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION AND ELECTRONIC COMMERCE**

**September 1999**

Recognizing the many contributions electronic commerce is making to the expansion of international trade, members of the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) call on World Trade Organization (WTO), who will be convening in Seattle for their 1999 Ministerial, to:

- Make permanent and binding the May 20, 1998 Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions;
- Affirm the importance of the basic telecommunications infrastructure to the growth and development of electronic commerce and urge countries to further liberalize these markets;
- Reaffirm that existing WTO obligations, rules, disciplines and commitments, including the GATS, GATT and TRIPS agreements are technology neutral;
- Agree that governments should refrain from enacting any new and unnecessary measures that would impede the growth of international electronic commerce;
- Refrain from enacting trade-related measures that have the effect of impeding, actually or potentially, international e-commerce, even if enactment of such measures would not otherwise violate existing international legal obligations;
- Agree that measures affecting e-commerce must be consistent with the following fundamental principles of international trade law:
  - National treatment and non-discrimination
  - Most Favored Nation (MFN) treatment
  - Transparency
  - Notification, review and consultation
- Work within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and the Agreement on Trade-related

Aspects of Intellectual Property Protection (TRIPs) to identify, reduce or eliminate barriers to international e-commerce

- Agree that there may be certain e-commerce related issues that are not appropriate subjects of international trade obligations and/or within the current scope of trade policy.
- Refrain from prematurely classifying all electronic transactions as good or services, but direct relevant WTO working bodies, in cooperation with private sector experts, to thoroughly examine the implications of classification;
- Recognize that the development of electronic commerce depends on cross-border transactions in all industry sectors and urge negotiators to liberalize cross-border services during the negotiations.

### **World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)**

The World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) is a consortium of 39 information technology (IT) industry associations from economies around the world (list attached). As the global voice of the IT industry, WITSA is dedicated to:

- advocating policies that advance the industry's growth and development;
- facilitating international trade and investment in IT products and services;
- strengthening WITSA's national industry associations through the sharing of knowledge, experience, and critical information;
- providing members with a vast network of contacts in nearly every geographic region of the world; and
- hosting the World Congress on IT, the only industry sponsored global IT event.

Founded in 1978 and originally known as the World Computing Services Industry Association, WITSA has increasingly assumed an active advocacy role in international public policy issues affecting the creation of a robust global information infrastructure, including:

- increasing competition through open markets and regulatory reform;
- protecting intellectual property;
- reducing tariff and non-tariff trade barriers to IT goods and services; and safeguarding the viability and continued growth of the Internet and electronic commerce.

More information on WITSA can be found online at <http://www.witsa.org>.

## The World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)

<b>Argentina</b>	Cámara de Empresas de Software y Servicios Informáticos (CESSI) <a href="http://www.cessi.com.ar">http://www.cessi.com.ar</a>
<b>Australia</b>	Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) <a href="http://www.aiia.com.au/">http://www.aiia.com.au/</a>
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS) <a href="http://www.samity.org">http://www.samity.org</a>
<b>Brazil</b>	Sociedade de Usuários de Informática e Telecomunicações - Sao Paulo (Sucesu-SP) <a href="http://www.sucesusp.com.br">http://www.sucesusp.com.br</a>
<b>Canada</b>	Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC) <a href="http://www.itac.ca/">http://www.itac.ca/</a>
<b>China, Taipei</b>	Information Service Industry Association of China, Taipei (CISA) <a href="http://www.cisanet.org.tw/english/index.html">http://www.cisanet.org.tw/english/index.html</a> / <a href="http://www.worldcongress2000.org">http://www.worldcongress2000.org</a>
<b>Colombia</b>	Colombian Software Federation (Federación Colombiana de Software - FEDECOLSOFT) <a href="http://www.fedecolsoft.org.co">http://www.fedecolsoft.org.co</a>
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Association for Consulting to Business (Asociace Pro Poradenství v Podnikání - APP)
<b>Ecuador</b>	Association Ecuatoriana de Tecnologia de Informacion y Servicios (AETIS)
<b>Egypt</b>	The Co-operative Society for Computers of Egypt (CSCE)
<b>Finland</b>	Information Technology Services Association (Tietotekniikan Palveluliitto - TIPAL) <a href="http://www.tipal.fi/index.html">http://www.tipal.fi/index.html</a>
<b>France</b>	Syntec Informatique <a href="http://www.syntec-informatique.fr/syntec/ow/home.cgi">http://www.syntec-informatique.fr/syntec/ow/home.cgi</a>
<b>Germany</b>	Bundesverband Informationstechnologien (BVITeV) <a href="http://www.bvit.de/home-eng.htm">http://www.bvit.de/home-eng.htm</a>
<b>Greece</b>	Federation of Hellenic Information Technology Enterprises (SEPE) <a href="http://www.sepe.gr/sepe1en.htm">http://www.sepe.gr/sepe1en.htm</a>
<b>Hong Kong</b>	Hong Kong Information Technology Federation (HKITF) <a href="http://www.hkitf.org.hk/">http://www.hkitf.org.hk/</a>
<b>India</b>	National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) <a href="http://www.nasscom.org/index.html">http://www.nasscom.org/index.html</a>
<b>Israel</b>	Israeli Association of Software Houses (IASH) <a href="http://www.iash.org.il/">http://www.iash.org.il/</a>
<b>Italy</b>	Associazione Nazionale Aziende Servizi Informatica e Telematica <a href="http://www.anasin.it/">http://www.anasin.it/</a>
<b>Japan</b>	Japan Information Service Industry Association (JISA) <a href="http://www.jisa.or.jp/">http://www.jisa.or.jp/</a>

<b>Lithuania</b>	The Association of Lithuania's Information, technology, telecommunications and office equipment (INFOBALT) / <a href="http://www.infobalt.lt">www.infobalt.lt</a>
<b>Malaysia</b>	Association of the Computer Industry (PIKOM) <a href="http://www.pikom.org.my">http://www.pikom.org.my</a>
<b>Mexico</b>	Asociación Mexicana de la Industria de Tecnologías de Información (AMITI) <a href="http://www.amiti.org.mx/">http://www.amiti.org.mx/</a>
<b>Mongolia</b>	Mongolian National Information Technology Association
<b>Morocco</b>	L' Association des Professionnels de L'Informatique de la Bureautique et de la Telematique (APEBI) / <a href="http://www.atlasnet.net.ma/forum-apebi/present.htm">http://www.atlasnet.net.ma/forum-apebi/present.htm</a>
<b>Netherlands</b>	Federation of Dutch Branch Associations in Information Technology (Federatie Nederlandse IT - FENIT) / <a href="http://www.fenit.nl/">http://www.fenit.nl/</a>
<b>New Zealand</b>	Information Technology Association of New Zealand (ITANZ) <a href="http://www.itanz.org.nz/">http://www.itanz.org.nz/</a>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	Software Industry Federation in Northern Ireland (SIF) <a href="http://www.sif.co.uk">http://www.sif.co.uk</a>
<b>Poland</b>	Polish Chamber of Information Technology and Telecommunications (Polska Izba Informatyki i Telekomunikacji - PIIT) / <a href="http://www.piit.org.pl/index_e.htm">http://www.piit.org.pl/index_e.htm</a>
<b>Portugal</b>	Associação Portuguesa das Empresas de Tecnologias de Informação e Comunicações (APESI)
<b>Republic of Korea</b>	Federation of Korean Information Industries (FKII) <a href="http://www.fkii.or.kr/english/index.html">http://www.fkii.or.kr/english/index.html</a>
<b>Romania</b>	IT&C Association of Romania (ATIC) <a href="http://www.softnet.ro/atic/">http://www.softnet.ro/atic/</a>
<b>Singapore</b>	Singapore Information Technology Federation (SITF) <a href="http://www.sitf.org.sg">www.sitf.org.sg</a>
<b>South Africa</b>	IT Association of South Africa (ITA) <a href="http://www.ita.org.za">http://www.ita.org.za</a>
<b>Spain</b>	Asociación Española de Empresas de Tecnologías de la Información (SEDISI) <a href="http://www.sedisi.es">http://www.sedisi.es</a>
<b>Sweden</b>	Swedish IT-companies' Organisation AB (Svenska IT-Företagens Organisation AB) <a href="http://www.sito.se/">http://www.sito.se/</a>
<b>Thailand</b>	The Association of Thai Computer Industry (ATCI) <a href="http://www.bdg.co.th/atci/atcihome.htm">http://www.bdg.co.th/atci/atcihome.htm</a>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Computing Services & Software Association (CSSA) <a href="http://www.cssa.co.uk/cssa/">http://www.cssa.co.uk/cssa/</a>
<b>United States</b>	Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) <a href="http://www.ita.org/index.htm">http://www.ita.org/index.htm</a>
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	Computer Suppliers' Association of Zimbabwe (COMSA)