

# ICC Global Trade Update

9 October 2025

**DISCLAIMER:** *Given the fast-moving trade policy environment, please ensure that latest developments have been taken into account in your operations and communications.*

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## US TARIFFS

### ***U.S. timber tariffs***

- On 29 September, the U.S. government [issued a Proclamation](#) and an [Annex](#) following the Department of Commerce's investigation into imports of timber, lumber, and their derivative products under section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962. This had been foreshadowed by several Truth Social posts from President Trump the previous week. The [Fact Sheet](#) sets out the following:
  - A 10% global tariff on imports of softwood lumber from 14 October.
  - A 25% global tariff on certain upholstered furniture, which will increase to 30% on 1 January.
  - A 25% global tariff on kitchen cabinets and vanities, which will increase to 50% on 1 January.
  - The treatment of products on the list of Potential Tariff Adjustments for Aligned Partners (PTAAP) remains unchanged unless an anti-dumping or countervailing duty order applies.

### **Section 301 Maritime Fees**

- U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has issued detailed [guidance](#) for vessel operators on the Section 301 fees targeting China's maritime and shipbuilding sectors. The fees will be effective from 14 October depending on Annexes I, II and III. Fees will be payable through the Treasury Department's pay.gov system prior to a vessel's first US port entry. CBP recommends payment three days prior to arrival. The fees are as follows:
  - Annex I: \$50/net ton for vessels owned or operated by Chinese entities
  - Annex II: Higher of \$18/net ton or \$120 per discharged container for Chinese-built vessels
  - Annex III: \$14/net ton for arriving vehicle carriers and roll-on/roll-off vessels.

### **Light truck tariffs**

- On 6 October, President Trump announced on social media that a 25% tariff will apply on all medium- and heavy-duty trucks from 1 November 2025. At the time of writing, no Section 232 investigation has been published and additional detail such as whether previous bilateral deals on automobiles would also apply to medium- and heavy-duty trucks.

### **AGOA ends**

- On 1 October 2025, the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which provided 32 African countries tariff preferences into the US expired after 25 years. UNCTAD has analysed the [potential impact](#) on African exporters.
- Sen. John Kennedy (R-LA) has introduced a bill to reauthorize the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which expired this week, while the Trump administration has endorsed a one-year extension of the trade-preference program for the first time. [S. 2958](#), which Kennedy introduced on 30 September, is titled "A bill to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, to require a full review of the bilateral relationship between the United States and South Africa, and for other purposes." However, its text was not released before the government shut down at midnight on Oct. 1, leaving unclear how long the extension would last and what "other purposes" Kennedy attached to the bill.

### **Film tariffs threatened**

- President Trump once again threatened to impose 100% tariffs on any foreign-made films. "Our movie making business has been stolen from the United States of America, by other Countries, just like stealing "candy from a baby," Mr. Trump wrote in a post on Truth Social. "Therefore, in order to solve this long time, never ending problem, I will be imposing a 100% Tariff on any and all movies that are made outside of the United States." Similar threats were made in May 2025, however no concrete action has been seen from the Administration since.

- Greer said USTR would be following up, saying the president is “very eager” to move into tariff mode. “All of these countries – whether it’s Canada or Australia or the UK or certain countries in the EU – they actually have a bunch of practices that are unfair,” Greer said in [an interview](#) with Fox Business.
- Read ICC’s brief on [Why services can’t realistically be tariffed and shouldn’t be](#).

## OTHER US TRADE MEASURES

### ***New US export restriction rules***

- The Commerce Department’s Bureau of Industry and Security issued an [interim final rule](#) expanding U.S. export restrictions to cover foreign affiliates that are majority-owned by entities already subject to end-user controls.
- The new rule closes a significant loophole in restricted party lists, strengthening the export control regime overall. Under the rule, any entity that is at least 50 percent owned by one or more entities on the Entity List or the Military End-User List will itself automatically be subject to Entity List/MEU List restrictions.

## CHINESE RESPONSE

### ***China revises international maritime transport legislation***

- In response to U.S. actions, on 29 September Chinese Premier Li Qiang [signed](#) a State Council decree that revises rules on international maritime transport to regulate related activities. Under the revised regulations, it says that China will take necessary countermeasures against countries or regions that impose or support discriminatory bans, restrictions, or similar measures targeting Chinese operators, vessels, or crew engaged in international maritime transport and related services.

### ***China announces new measures on US and Mexico***

- In response to Mexico’s recent tariff announcements, China has [announced](#) a new anti-dumping investigation into imported pecans as well as [broader investigation](#) into Mexico’s restrictive measures against China. It also called on Mexico to comply with WTO rules in its anti-dumping investigations, after Mexico opened 11 cases this year targeting Chinese products including float glass and PVC tarpaulins. According to [Xinhua](#), the Commerce Ministry said it firmly opposes protectionism, has launched a trade barrier probe into Mexico’s proposed tariff hikes, and will take necessary measures to safeguard Chinese firms’ rights.
- Separately, China added three U.S. entities to its Export Control List and three companies to their Unreliable Entity List.

### ***China announces export controls for Electric Vehicles***

- China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) released a new joint policy on 26 September that starting from 1 January 2026, the export of electric vehicles (HS 8703801090) will require an export licence and the presentation of new documentation.

### ***China announces re-export controls for rare earth***

- China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) announced significant new [export controls](#) on rare earths and related technologies including their re-export. Overseas operators must now comply with new dual-use export licenses. New [restrictions](#) were also placed on Chinese citizens and companies from exporting manufacturing technologies and know-how relating to mining, processing and recycling of rare earths.

## **TRADE REMEDIES**

### ***EU announces steel safeguards***

- The European Commission on 7 October [published](#) a proposal for steel safeguard regulations to replace current safeguard measures, which were due to expire in June 2026. The new measures reduce the existing quota by 47% to 18.3 million tonnes annually and increase the *ad valorem* out-of-quota tariff from 25% to 50% once volume thresholds are met. Unused quotas will not be able to be rolled over into the next period.
- The proposal includes the introduction of new 'melt and pour' rules that will require proof of origin showing where the steel was originally melted to prevent circumvention. These align with recent US measures and will have an impact on volumes eligible for access to country-specific quotas, which the EU will negotiate with its trading partners. While these new rules have not yet been developed, their precise design will be critical for businesses looking to comply with the new rules and maintain access to quotas.
- In order to introduce the new measures, the EU will need to negotiate with interested countries at the WTO to raise the EU's non-preferential tariff rate under an Article XXVIII process. The proposal also envisions the possibility of safeguard measures being introduced even for those countries where the EU has an FTA.
- Separately, the Commission has [imposed](#) definitive anti-dumping duties on imports of certain hot-rolled steel products from Egypt, Japan and Vietnam for five years. These measures follow an investigation confirming unfair pricing practices. The duties are between 6.9% and 30% depending on the country.

## **FTA DEVELOPMENTS**

### ***EU and UK meet to discuss implementation of the Windsor Framework***

- On 2 October, the UK and EU [met](#) as part of the Specialised Committee on the Implementation of the Windsor Framework. The co-chairs took stock of the implementation of the Windsor Framework since the last meeting on 10 June 2025.
- In the sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) area, they welcomed the focus on improving the implementation of individual labelling requirements as well as progressing the provision of information in general SPS certificates. They agreed to maintain a high pace of progress across all pending issues, particularly regarding the operational delivery of all permanent SPS Inspection facilities, ensuring the full compliance of certificates, and applying flexibilities only to compliant goods. Work will continue with the aim of achieving improved implementation ahead of the next meeting of the Specialised Committee.

### ***Three FTAs take effect on 1 October***

- Three FTAs took effect on 1 October:
  - [Malaysia-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement](#)
  - [Australia-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement](#)
  - [EFTA-India Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement](#)

### ***Colombia suspends FTA with Israel***

- Colombia's President Gustavo Petro announced on 1 October that he had ordered the termination of the Colombia-Israel Free Trade Agreement. The move requires ratification by Colombia's Congress and would trigger a six-month sunset clause under the agreement.

### ***UK and Greenland restart FTA negotiations***

- On 3 October, while UK Prime Minister Kier Starmer was in Denmark for the European Political Community summit, Greenland and the UK [agreed](#) to restart FTA negotiations which had been launched in 2022 but recently stalled.

## **CUSTOMS UPDATES**

### ***UK publishes notice for DCTS preference scheme – goods graduation***

- The UK government has published a [notice](#) listing goods for which preferential tariffs on imports from Standard Preferences tier countries will be suspended from 1 January 2026 to 31 December 2028.

## **WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION**

### ***General Council***

- At this week's WTO [General Council](#), Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala urged members to strengthen cooperation amid growing trade tensions and to advance work on reform ahead of MC14. Ambassador Petter Ølberg, the facilitator on WTO reform, outlined a new two-track work plan: Track 1 on governance and decision-making—including options to introduce greater flexibility—and Track 2 on fairness, reflecting shifts in the global trading landscape and the need for a level playing field. He noted that the next phase will narrow the range of views into concrete options for ministers. Several WTO Members expressed support for this approach. The EU statement can be found [here](#).
- WTO Members once again failed to incorporate the Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development into the WTO on the basis of objections from only a handful of WTO Members.

### ***Trade Negotiations Committee***

- The WTO Director-General chaired a meeting of the [Trade Negotiations Committee](#) on 30 September. In her opening remarks, she referenced the convening notice she circulated in advance, inviting members for their views on prospects for a MC14 outcome on agriculture and on finalizing negotiations on additional provisions to the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, which [recently entered into force](#). She also noted ongoing work on development and issues related to least developed countries.
- In the discussion that followed, Members responded to the Director-General's questions regarding the outlook for the agriculture negotiations and possible outcomes on agriculture at MC14, and ways to finalize the remaining negotiations on the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies.

### ***China makes WTO e-commerce announcement***

- China's Ministry of Commerce, together with the Cyberspace Administration of China, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, the General Administration of Customs, and the State Administration for Market Regulation, jointly [announced](#) that Beijing will pilot implementation of the WTO E-Commerce Agreement. The plan outlines 41 measures across five priority areas, including trade digitalization, data governance, digital consumption, telecom transparency, and international cooperation in digital trade. It aims to promote the wider use of electronic documents, e-certification, e-contracts, and paperless trade, while strengthening data protection, cross-border data flows, and the digital trade environment.

### ***US Senate confirms Deputy USTR to the WTO***

- The Senate by a vote of 51 to 47 approved the nomination of Joseph Barloon to be Deputy US Trade Representative. Mr. Barloon will serve as the US representative to the WTO. He previously served as General Counsel at USTR during the first Trump Administration, followed by a stint as an acting Deputy USTR.

### ***WTO Technical Barriers to Trade Committee***

- At a meeting on 2 October, the WTO [Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade](#) (TBT) advanced preparations for thematic discussions on critical and emerging technologies, good regulatory practices and metrology in trade to be held in November. WTO members also considered further refining their notification processes and the way their TBT measures are tracked in the ePing platform.

## **ICC NEWS & PUBLICATIONS**

- [The opportunity to turn trade finance green, at scale](#), 30 September 2025

## **WHAT WE'RE READING**

- The Commonwealth Secretariat has a new report out on [Model Law on Digital Trade and Guide to Enactment](#).
- From the APEC Secretariat, [the Costs of Hidden Measures: APEC's Experience with Non-Tariff Measures \(NTMs\)](#).
- UNECE's [White Paper on Digital Product Passports and Critical Raw Materials for Batteries: Legal Conflicts and Principles for Cross-border Cooperation](#)
- ITC has published their annual [Global Digital Trade Development Report 2025](#)
- Staff working paper from the WTO on [Great expectations: Quantifying the potential economic impact of the WTO Agreement on E-Commerce](#).

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