



BUSINESS CALLS FOR AGREEMENT ON BAN ON CUSTOMS DUTIES ON ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSIONS IN E-COMMERCE JSI

7 March 2024 - The Global Services Coalition applauds the renewal of the WTO Moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions until MC 14 at last week's WTO Ministerial Conference. The GSC believes that WTO members must now move forward to secure an enduring ban, grasping the opportunity of the Joint Statement Initiative negotiations on E-Commerce. The JSI offers a vital route in early 2024 to achieve progress in securing an immediate and lasting solution on customs duties on electronic transmissions.

The case for no customs duties on digital trade was fully made in the months leading up to MC13. As many as [211 business associations from all over the world](#), including from least developed countries and strong emerging markets, assembled a convincing business evidence base, backed by independent research and analyses, against tariffs on electronic transmissions. Our joint work across industry sectors confirms that customs duties on electronic transmissions would lead to higher costs for all digitally enabled trade and decrease competitiveness for businesses adopting digital tools, especially MSMEs.

Negotiators are now to meet in Geneva for another round of discussions in the JSI on E-Commerce. The Global Services Coalition urges the JSI co-convenors and participants to achieve a commercially meaningful near-term package that will serve as a building block toward a more comprehensive outcome. The package must include an enduring ban on customs duties on electronic transmissions. We also call on the negotiators to ensure inclusion, in the E-Commerce package, of provisions on e-payments, and avoid any exclusion of major sectors such as financial services. If they do not cover these services, global rules on digital trade would make no business sense. The package must also include a review clause and frame a path forward towards achieving a more comprehensive outcome including provisions on core data flow, data localization, and source code.

GSC members have proven staunch advocates of the negotiations on E-Commerce since their initiation five years ago. We have established and agreed collective ambitions for these negotiations. We thank the co-convenors from Australia, Japan, and Singapore for the repeated opportunities they have allowed us to present the business case for more multilateral governance on digital trade.

We call for fast-tracking the completion of the JSI negotiations on E-Commerce, including all the elements noted above, as an urgent business priority.

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