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## European Services Forum welcomes the announcement of the Global “Agreement on Electronic Commerce”

The European Services Forum (ESF), representing the interests of the European service sectors in international trade and investment negotiations, warmly welcomes the announcement of the Global “Agreement on Electronic Commerce” in Geneva today.

President of the European Services Forum (ESF), Annette Meijer, congratulates the European Commission and the Australian, Japanese and Singapore governments, the three co-convenors of the negotiations for their dedicated global leadership in reaching a global agreement on digital trade.

“Today’s announcement demonstrates that the WTO negotiating function can deliver through a plurilateral process,” said Annette Meijer. “This is a really significant outcome at the WTO that will deliver real benefits for trade in services.” The European services industry has supported these talks from the start, and we are pleased to see that 91 countries have participated in the process, accounting for more than 90% of global digitally delivered services.

“This deal has the potential to deliver benefits for European businesses in every sector of the economy and to reduce the cost and complexity of international commerce and support trust and security for European consumers” said Pascal Kerneis, Managing Director of the European Services Forum.

ESF looks forward to a gradual easing of constraints on global digital interoperability; easier use of e-invoicing, e-authentication and e-payments and greater efficiency in consumer protection and cyber security regulation. The OECD projects an improvement in global digital market openness in the order of 30 percent. Importantly, we now have at hand a binding commitment that international electronic transmissions will remain free of customs duties in all WTO members that join this deal.

ESF calls upon all WTO members to join this deal and incorporate it into the core rules of the WTO.”

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**Contact:** Pascal Kerneis – Managing Director – ESF – [p.kerneis@esf.be](mailto:p.kerneis@esf.be) - +32 476 321 027