

ICC Global Trade Update

20 April 2026

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Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| World Trade Organization..... | 1 |
| United States of America..... | 3 |
| European Union..... | 5 |
| China | 5 |
| United Kingdom | 7 |
| Free Trade Agreements..... | 8 |
| Customs Developments..... | 8 |
| Trade Remedies..... | 9 |
| ICC News & Publications | 10 |
| What we're reading..... | 10 |

World Trade Organization

MC14 takeaway documents

- The chair of MC14 has issued a summary ([WT/MIN\(26\)/35](#)) which outlines the state of play following the failure of trade ministers to find consensus on key issues, including on WTO Reform, TRIPS, and Investment Facilitation for Development.
- The Ministers who facilitated the discussions at MC14 on WTO Reform have published a [takeaway document](#) from the breakout sessions. It provides useful summaries across each of the sessions on foundational issues, decision-making, development, and level-playing field issues.

Joint statement on E-Commerce Moratorium

- 23 WTO Members have agreed to temporarily continue the Moratorium on imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions, following the failure of the full membership to extend the Moratorium at MC14. The group, in a communication ([WT/GC/283](#)) said they will continue to honour the Moratorium at least until the next meeting of the WTO's General Council (6-8 May 2026).

MC14 Agriculture Facilitator Report

- The MC14 agriculture facilitator published his report ([JOB/AG/276](#)) confirming the main fault lines on core issues such as food security, domestic support, public stockholding, and Special & Differential Treatment (SDT).

Türkiye's position on e-commerce

- Türkiye has circulated a clarification ([WT/GC/284](#)) on the e-commerce moratorium following MC14, stating: "Türkiye agreed to the extension of the moratorium on electronic transmissions for a further two-year period at MC14 as well. Moreover, as a compromise aimed at a mutually acceptable solution, Türkiye also accepted the extension of the moratorium for a longer period, provided that its scope and definition are clarified. Türkiye's stated expectation was nothing more than maintaining its rights and obligations under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). In this context, Türkiye stands ready to outline the basis for a meaningful and forward-looking discussion on the possible extension of the moratorium in the period ahead."

USTR on MC14

- US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer says he returned from Yaoundé convinced that the WTO "isn't a serious forum." In an opinion piece titled [Another Fish Story From the WTO – The Organization Has Failed, and the U.S. Will Chart Its Own Course on Trade Policy](#), published in the Wall Street Journal.

Intellectual property

- A WTO appeal arbitrator ruled in favour of the European Union in its dispute with China on intellectual property enforcement (DS611), marking an important win for European standard essential patent (SEP) holders affected by China's anti-suit injunction policy. China has now [announced](#) the withdrawal of its ASI policy, following the ruling.

Investment Facilitation for Development

- The 129 WTO members supporting the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement (IFDA) issued a [joint ministerial declaration](#) on 29 March at the end of MC14. The IFDA co-coordinators, the Republic of Korea and Chile, issued a [joint press release](#).

FIT-P Ministerial statement

- On 31 March, Costa Rica, Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Rwanda, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay, as members of the Future of Investment and Trade (FIT) Partnership, issued a [Joint Statement on Maintaining Open and Resilient Supply Chains](#). The statement covers the Strait of Hormuz and ongoing efforts to refrain from imposing trade restrictive measures. New Zealand will take over from Singapore as Coordinating Chair of the FIT Partnership in April 2026. The second FIT Partnership Ministerial will take place in Auckland in July 2026.

United States of America

IEEPA refunds

- In early April, the plaintiff in the lead IEEPA refund case (Atmus Filtration) withdrew its case. As a result, the issue of refunds has now shifted to a separate case (Euro-Nations Florida), and a new court ruling will be required, which will likely delay refunds.
- Separately, CBP published additional [guidance on how importers can request IEEPA refunds](#). Beginning 20 April, requests can be submitted through the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) by the Importer of Record or its broker. Requests must be submitted in a prescribed format (.csv file listing the relevant entry summaries (up to 9,999 lines per file, with multiple submissions allowed). Refunds can only be received via ACH (the system for receiving electronic refunds) either directly to the IOR or to a designated party under a Form 4811. For entries that are still unliquidated, refunds are expected to process during the normal course of liquidation.
- **Timing will depend on the status of entries:**
 - For unliquidated entries, refunds are expected through the normal liquidation process.
 - For entries liquidated within the past 80 days, refunds are expected within 60–90 days of filing, unless CBP identifies a compliance concern requiring further review.

- **Not all entries are eligible.** CBP has confirmed that certain entries will not be eligible for refunds, including:
 - entries under reconciliation (or filed as reconciliation entries)
 - entries tied to drawback claims or open protests,
 - entries not properly filed in ACE, and
 - entries subject to antidumping or countervailing duty (AD/CVD) orders where the Department of Commerce has issued liquidation instructions pending under 19 USC 1504(d).
- CBP has also confirmed that refund requests cannot be submitted via Post Summary Correction (PSC) and must instead follow the designated refund process through CAPE.

Forced labour

- The Labor Department [announced](#) the launch of new voluntary self-assessment tools to empower US companies to strengthen their global supply chains, protect their brands and defend US workers from unfair competition due to labour abuses overseas.

US National Trade Estimate Report

- The USTR has published [the 2026 National Trade Estimate](#) (NTE) to President Trump and Congress. The NTE provides a country-by-country assessment of trade barriers, offering a clear view of how individual markets are perceived by the United States. It is often used to identify priorities for future trade action, making it a useful early signal of potential areas of risk or engagement.
- The findings of this year's report are likely to inform future US tariff actions under Section 301 and may signal which jurisdictions may be targeted in future investigations.

Pharmaceutical S232 tariffs

- On 2 April, the US Administration announced a headline 100% tariff on pharmaceuticals and pharmaceutical ingredients through a [Proclamation](#) (Executive Order) and related [Fact Sheet](#).
- Key details are set out in Annexes I-IV, including the product codes covered, company-specific agreements, and the phased implementation schedule. It also identifies the pharmaceutical products that fall within the scope of Section 232 tariffs but are not yet subject to duties.

- The implementation dates are staggered. For companies listed in Annex III, tariffs will take effect on 31 July 2026. For all other companies, tariffs will take effect on 29 September 2026.

Section 232 tariffs on metals

- Also on 2 April, President Trump issued a [Proclamation](#) and associated [Fact Sheet](#) making changes to the Section 232 tariffs on steel, aluminium, copper and their derivative products. The changes took effect on 6 April 2026. The core shift is that ad valorem tariffs will now apply to the full customs value of imported metal products, not just the metal content. The previous inclusion processes under Proclamations 10895 and 10896 (the February 2025 steel and aluminium proclamations), and 10962 (the July 2025 copper proclamation) are terminated. A new joint process gives the Secretary of Commerce and the US Trade Representative rolling authority to add derivative articles to the tariff scope whenever they jointly determine that imports threaten national security objectives.

European Union

EU Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism

- The European Commission has announced that the CBAM certificate price for the first quarter of 2026 will be €75.36, reflecting the average EU ETS allowance price in the preceding quarter.

China

China launches investigation into US trade practices that impede trade in green products

- On 27 March, China's Ministry of Commerce (MOFCOM) launched a trade barrier investigation into US practices and measures alleged to impede trade in green products, via Announcement No. 18 (2026). MOFCOM states that preliminary evidence and information indicate that the United States has adopted a number of practices and measures that hinder trade in green products, including restricting exports of green products to the United States, slowing the deployment of new energy projects, and restricting technical cooperation related to green products. MOFCOM considers that these measures may seriously harm Chinese commercial interests and could be inconsistent with WTO rules as well as economic and trade treaties or agreements jointly concluded or acceded to by China and the United States.

China announces launch of investigations into US practices that disrupt global supply chains

- Also on 27 March, MOFCOM launched a trade barrier investigation into U.S. practices and measures alleged to disrupt global supply chains, via Announcement No. 17 (2026). MOFCOM states that preliminary evidence indicates that the United States has adopted a large number of practices and measures that seriously disrupt global production and supply chains, including restricting or prohibiting Chinese products from entering the U.S. market, restricting or prohibiting the export of high-tech products to China, and restricting or prohibiting two-way investment in key sectors. MOFCOM considers that these practices and measures may seriously harm Chinese commercial interests and could violate WTO rules and other economic and trade treaties or agreements jointly concluded or acceded to by China and the United States.

China announces conclusion of Mexico investigation

- MOFCOM has concluded its trade and investment barrier investigation into Mexico's restrictive measures. It determined that the measures taken by the Mexican government, including increased import tariffs on products from non-FTA partners such as China, constitute a trade and investment barrier under China's Rules for the Investigation of Foreign Trade Barriers.

Economic Strategic Security

- On 8 April, Chinese Premier Li Qiang signed a [State Council decree](#) enacting new regulations aimed at safeguarding the country's industrial supply chains. The new framework establishes a security review system to investigate risks linked to foreign governments, organisations or individuals that may affect China's industrial or supply chain security. The new measures are a response to national security measures adopted by the US and other Western countries, including chip bans, technological blockades and attempts at decoupling from Chinese supply chains. The Chinese government may adopt countermeasures (such as import and export restrictions or the imposition of additional special fees) against perceived unfair treatment.

Economic coercion

- On 7 April 2026, China's State Council issued Order No. 835, promulgating the "[Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Counteracting Foreign Unlawful Extraterritorial Jurisdiction](#)", which came into force on 13 April 2026. According to the Regulations, such extraterritorial jurisdiction measures refer to actions taken by a foreign country that violate international law and the basic norms governing international relations, and that harm China's sovereignty, security, and development

interests, or the legitimate rights and interests of Chinese citizens and organisations. The Regulations also authorise the Chinese government to adopt countermeasures in response to such actions and to exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction over relevant conduct if a sufficient nexus exists.

United Kingdom

Consultation on potential powers to protect the UK from adverse economic pressure

- On 9 April, the UK government launched a consultation on '[Potential powers to protect the UK from adverse economic pressure](#)'. The consultation delivers on a commitment in the UK's Trade Strategy, published in June 2025, to explore new powers to respond more effectively to economic pressure from other states. It highlights the growing use of trade and investment restrictions as political leverage and seeks views on whether additional tools are needed, and how they should be designed. The consultation covers potential measures across trade in goods, procurement, intellectual property, investment, and trade in services. The full list of questions is available in the [consultation document](#). Responses can be submitted via an [online form](#) or by email to economicpressure@businessandtrade.gov.uk by 18 June 2026.

UK Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism

- HMRC has opened a [technical consultation](#) on draft secondary legislation for the UK's CBAM, which enters into force on 1 January 2027. It focuses on the rules governing embodied emissions and the monitoring and verification of emissions data. It supplements a previous (now closed) consultation covering the administrative requirements, the CBAM rate and carbon price relief. HMRC has also published a draft Force of Law Notice and a System Boundaries document alongside the draft regulations, which provide further detail on how the legislation will operate in practice. Responses should be submitted by email to cbampolicyteam@hmrc.gov.uk by 21 May 2026.

Free Trade Agreements

EU-Australia FTA text published

- The EU and Australia have [published](#) the text of their FTA, though the market access schedules are not yet available.

GCC and South Korea prepare to sign FTA

- The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and South Korea met on 2 April to [finalise](#) the technical arrangements ahead of the final signing of the GCC-Korea FTA. Both sides hope to complete the remaining procedures in the near future.

Customs Developments

GCC holds public-private dialogue on vital supply chains

- The GCC Secretariat held a [meeting](#) with the GCC Chambers of Commerce and relevant customs authorities on 6 April. Participants agreed on the need to intensify coordination among member states, hold periodic meetings of specialised committees and technical teams in vital sectors, follow up on the implementation of decisions from relevant ministerial meetings, and activate mechanisms for continuous follow-up and real-time information exchange among the parties concerned. The meeting also considered proposals from the Chambers on financing facilities and guarantee programmes to address the high transportation and insurance costs due to the ongoing conflict.

India publishes new rules on special economic zones

- As part of the 2026 Budget, the Government of India has [introduced](#) a one-time measure extending the benefit of concessional duties to domestic clearance of goods manufactured in special economic zones. The measure applies from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

China consults on rules of origin

- China Customs is [soliciting public comments](#) on the “Regulations on the Origin of Import and Export Goods of China (Draft for Public Comment)”. The overall structure and fundamental principles of the existing Regulations remain unchanged. The draft proposes targeted revisions to four provisions, Articles 3, 5, 10, and 13, to enhance legal clarity, operational feasibility, and alignment with international rules of origin and domestic enforcement practice.

Canada revises China Surtax Remission Order & seeks views on China EV quota

- On 8 April, Canada [revised](#) Customs Notice 25-05: China Surtax Remission Order. The revision aligns with Canada's ongoing [consultation](#) on Canada's allocation and administration of the import quota for Chinese EVs. Feedback will inform a longer-term policy to administer the quota from 1 September 2026. The longer-term policy is expected to be released in June 2026. If the government adopts an allocation approach, an application period will be open upon release of the policy.

Trade Remedies

US measures

- **Steel fencing:** The International Trade Commission (ITC) has determined that a US industry is materially injured by imports of temporary steel fencing from China. The Department of Commerce found that these imports were sold in the United States at less than fair value and subsidised by the Chinese government. As a result of the Commission's affirmative determinations, the Department of Commerce will issue antidumping and countervailing duty orders on these imports. Commerce found dumping rates ranged from 129.70 percent to 184.27 percent.
- **Rebar:** The ITC has determined that a US industry is materially injured by imports of steel concrete reinforcing bar from Algeria. The Department of Commerce found that these imports were sold in the United States at less than fair value. As a result of the Commission's affirmative determination, Commerce will issue an antidumping duty order on these imports. Commerce last month found a dumping margin of 127.32%.
- **Quartz:** The ITC determined that quartz surface products are being imported into the United States in such increased quantities as to be a substantial cause of serious injury to the domestic industry producing like or directly competitive products. The investigation now moves to the remedy phase. The ITC held a public hearing on the remedy phase on 14 April and will submit its report covering its injury determination, remedy recommendations, and related findings to the President by 18 May.

UK measures

- **Steel:** The UK government has [published](#) an information note setting out the changes to the provisional product scope and quota volumes for the new steel tariffs, which will apply from 1 July 2026.
- **Excavators:** The UK Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) has initiated its first [absorption](#) review, following an application from a UK excavator producer.

EU measures

- **Steel safeguards:** On 9 April, the Commission [adopted](#) Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/846, amending the safeguard measures on certain steel imports. The amendments are specifically designed to prevent quota circumvention and restore market balance.

ICC News & Publications

- **Guide:** [Enabling digital trade through legal reform: A guide for policymakers and practitioners](#) (17 April 2026)
- **Report:** [The cost of policy uncertainty on investment](#) (16 April 2026)
- **Press release:** [ICC highlights Europe's role moving global trade from fragmentation to delivery](#) (10 April 2026)
- **Press release:** [ICC welcomes joint statement on e-commerce moratorium, calls for a permanent solution](#) (8 April 2026)
- **Report:** [Lowest first-quarter maritime piracy and armed robbery figures since 1991, but vigilance remains essential](#) (8 April 2026)
- **Report:** [Enhancing investment flows to emerging and developing economies: Rethinking green macroprudential regulations](#) (27 March 2026)

What we're reading

- From the IMF: [Understanding global imbalances](#).
- From the Federal Reserve Bank of New York: [Global Supply Chain Pressure Index](#).
- From the UK government: [UK Import Trends Monitor](#).
- From the American Action Forum: [Lessons From the EU CBAM: Challenges of Measuring Product-level Carbon Emissions](#)
- From ECIPE: [Audiovisual Services: A Neglected Area of EU Competitiveness](#)
- From the EU Joint Research Centre: [The increasing role of services in the EU's integration into global value chains \(GVC\)](#)
- From CSIS: [Practical Approach to the 2027 RCEP General Review](#)
- From the Global Data Alliance: [US-EU: Recommendations for Implementation of Digital Trade Commitments in the Joint Statement on a US-EU Joint Framework on Trade](#)

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