

GLOSSARY OF TRADE AND RELATED TERMS

- USITC** US International Trade Commission. An independent US fact-finding and regulatory agency whose six members make determinations of injury and recommendations for relief for industries or workers seeking relief from increasing import competition. In addition, upon the request of Congress or the President, or on its own initiative, the Commission conducts comprehensive studies of specific industries and trade problems, and the probable impact on specific US industries of proposed reductions in US tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers. The USITC was created by the Trade Act of 1974 as the successor agency to the US Tariff Commission, which was created in 1916.
- USTR** United States Trade Representative. An official in the Executive Office of the President, with cabinet-level and ambassadorial rank, charged with advising the President and leading and coordinating the US government on international trade negotiations and the development of trade policy. (USTR also designates the White House office which the representative heads). Established by the Carter administration in 1980, USTR succeeded the position of Special Trade Representative (STR), which was created (at congressional insistence) in the Trade Expansion Act of 1962; and whose status and authority were strengthened in the Trade Act of 1974.
- Valuation** The appraisal of the worth of imported goods by customs officials for the purpose of determining the amount of duty payable in the importing country. The GATT Customs Valuation Code obligates governments that sign it to use the "transaction value" of imported goods -- or the price actually paid or payable for them -- as the principal basis for valuing the goods for customs purposes.
- Value Added Tax (VAT)** An indirect tax on consumption that is levied at each discrete point in the chain of production and distribution, from the raw material stage to final consumption. Each processor or merchant pays a tax proportional to the amount by which he increases the value of the goods he purchases for resale after making his own contribution. The Value Added Tax is imposed throughout the European community and EFTA countries, but the tax rates have not been harmonized among those countries.