



THE SUSTAINABLE SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVE

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EU ProSun calls on AFASE to stop scaremongering

Chinese solar panel manufacturers and importers must stop giving Europe false alarms.

European solar manufacturers demand the end of scaremongering by the lobby group AFASE the "Alliance for Affordable Solar Energy", which represents the interests of Chinese solar module manufacturers and their importers in Europe.

Milan Nitzschke, President of EU ProSun said, "AFASE scares solar installers and customers throughout Europe with tasteless PR stunts and doomsday scenarios. Such behaviour is no longer acceptable, not even lobby groups of nuclear companies have upset the solar market as much as AFASE."

AFASE was launched by Chinese solar manufacturers and their main importers in Europe. The first spokespersons were senior employees of the Chinese companies Yingli, Trina and CSI; the same companies who had previously co-founded the advocacy group Coalition for Affordable Solar already in the U.S. to avoid anti-dumping duties there. Indeed regularly quoted in the media, the 'Chairman' of AFASE was also the European President of one of China's largest solar manufacturers. The six largest Chinese solar companies until only recently were listed as AFASE key supporters. Today, every reference of the Chinese founders has been removed from the AFASE website.

AFASE completely avoids discussion of the substantive dumping allegations, which are prohibited under WTO and EU law. "AFASE cannot specifically comment on the dumping or subsidy allegations," the newly elected chairman of the lobby group recently said in an interview.

Milan Nitzschke commented, "It is ironic that AFASE does not have a single clear position on anti-dumping measures, despite spending millions of euros in lobbying budgets and expensive PR agencies to avoid anti-dumping measures. Dumping is fraud, and dumping is prohibited under law. Such predatory behaviour hurts industry, competition and free trade and eventually leads to monopolies and monopoly prices. China has already achieved the objectives of its dumping strategy by gaining 80% of the EU market, and now wants the remaining 20%. Meanwhile, the U.S. government and the EU Commission have found clear evidence of Chinese dumping, but AFASE remains silent on this subject."

The main goal of AFASE in their own words is to prevent EU anti-dumping duties against Chinese solar products. AFASE wants to reach this goal by any means, as EU ProSun notes:

1. AFASE hired people to escort a coffin around EU buildings in Brussels to warn of supposed job losses if the EU takes action against dumping. This distasteful publicity stunt was a slap in the face for over 15,000 people who have already lost their jobs because of China's dumping in Europe's solar industry, and for all those still afraid of losing their job.
2. AFASE made outlandish claims that EU duties will lead to more job losses than actually exist in the entire sector across Europe.

3. AFASE deliberately ignores the experience and reality of what happened in the U.S. which introduced anti-dumping duties on solar cells and modules from China a year ago. Today, there are more jobs than before the duties and the number of newly installed systems has reached a record level. Indeed there was an increase of 148% over Q1 2013 compared to Q1 2012!
4. AFASE makes outlandish claims that anti-dumping measures would double the price of solar panels. Again, the U.S. experience shows that with the reintroduction of fair competition, prices keep falling. An American solar system is now a third cheaper than before tariffs. Only cheap Chinese dumped systems are no longer on the market.
5. AFASE slandered European solar manufacturers and accused them of being technologically inferior to China's state bankrolled companies. The opposite is true. Europe has the most modern factories with the highest automation rates in the world. Europe's current production capacity is equal to one third of the total world market for solar modules.
6. AFASE claims to represent the European solar industry. The AFASE site names more than 500 "supporters", but only one known to be a manufacturing company.

Milan Nitzschke concluded: "We are experiencing a significant decline in Europe's solar market, during which time AFASE stoked the fears of thousands of people in the solar industry with horror scenarios without any basis in fact. AFASE hurts everyone in the solar industry; the European manufacturers who they insult, the installers who they deceive, and potential customers who they scare. This has to stop. The future of solar energy in Europe and the future of our industrial base are too valuable to lose because of the lies of a single Chinese-backed lobby group."

For further information: Site www.prosun.org

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