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Solar Industry: Expiry Reviews of anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures

EU ProSun: Clean energy needs fair competition

Brussels. Trade defense measures against dumped Chinese solar imports will continue to apply in 2016. Today the European Commission announced the opening of expiry reviews of the anti-dumping and anti-subsidy duties, and minimum import prices on Chinese solar products. Existing measures remain in force during the investigations which can take up to 15 months. EU industry welcomes the initiation of the procedures.

Milan Nitzschke, President of EU ProSun said: "Dumping in a market economy is the greatest threat for competition, jobs and innovation. As long as Chinese manufacturers fail to comply with basic international trade and competition rules, the EU must maintain the measures in full force and effect."

In 2013, trade defence measures in the solar sector were adopted by the European Commission and Council, after Chinese dumping had resulted in the loss of thousands of jobs in the European solar industry. Numerous well-known European manufacturers had to close down their production facilities. At their peak, imports from China had taken a market share of over 80 percent in Europe with sales of solar modules at prices far below actual production costs. As a result of the measures adopted in 2013, this market share has declined. More than half of the European production capacity for solar cells and modules has been preserved, and manufacturers are investing millions of euros in new solar production and research in Europe. In 2016 alone well over 100 Million Euro investments are planned.

For EU ProSun the preservation of industrial capacity and technical know-how in Europe are vital. "Only under conditions of fair competition can we maintain our high quality, environmental and social standards. It is absurd, even with the dramatic pictures from China, that some people believe that it is possible to build a clean energy turnaround on the basis of dumped imports from China."

The vast majority of European solar manufacturers, as well as the majority of consulted Member States supported the opening of the expiry reviews. EU ProSun, which has requested the launching of the procedures on behalf of European industry, is supported by more than 30 solar manufacturers and 150 installation companies from 15 EU Member States.

Even before the EU, the US introduced anti-dumping and anti-subsidy measures against Chinese solar imports. Since their introduction in 2012, product diversity, jobs and industrial investments in the US have risen, and the American solar market has grown by a constant 30 percent per year.

The Commission also opened today a partial interim review of the product scope of the measures regarding a differentiation between solar modules and their component solar cells. EU ProSun does not believe this review is necessary but the opening of this additional procedure underlines the EU's careful approach in examining all aspects of trade flows of this important product.