

## China-U.S.-EU Joint Press Statement

### Consumer Product Safety – a Common Objective

September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Beijing, China

Ensuring a high level of product safety is a matter of shared concern for China, the United States and the European Union. Joint efforts and intensified cooperation are in the mutual interest of our citizens and economies.

The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (AQSIQ), the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the European Commission (EC) launched today a "Joint U.S.-EU-China Initiative on Consumer Product Safety Compliance." The outreach initiative will take place in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Shanghai, from September 19 to September 24, 2008. The initiative commenced this morning in Beijing, with a Tripartite meeting of senior officials. Wei Chuanzhong, Vice Minister of AQSIQ chaired the meeting with Nancy Nord, Acting Chairman of the CPSC and Robert Madelin, Director General for Health and Consumers in the EC, and members of their delegations.

To foster consumer product safety and trade in safer consumer goods in each of their territories, the Tripartite participants, in a spirit of pragmatism, mutual respect and consultation on an equal basis, and with the benefit of our past cooperation, are launching a series of joint seminars throughout the People's Republic of China. The goal of these sessions is to clarify the Chinese, U.S. and European safety requirements for a number of key consumer products, such as toys, clothing, and certain electrical equipment, with a view to ensuring safety throughout the entire supply chain. The opening discussions between the Tripartite participants were detailed and pragmatic, with consensus in the following areas:

I. The Tripartite participants agree that EU-U.S.-China consumer product trade plays a significant and ever-increasing role in international consumer product trade. Strengthening cooperation in consumer product safety and resolving related issues will contribute significantly to the promotion of international trade in safe consumer products.

II. The Tripartite participants agree that product safety is a focal area of mutual concern. In the past few years, the three parties have undertaken tremendous efforts toward making consumer products safer and among them, have established effective mechanisms for close cooperation. The Tripartite participants stress the positive developments made since the signing of the *Industrial Products and WTO/TBT Consultation Mechanism between DG Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China* (October 2002), the *Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's*

*Republic of China (April 2004), the Memorandum of Understanding on Administrative Cooperation Arrangement between DG Health and Consumers of the European Commission and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (January 2006, currently being upgraded), and the Guideline for Action on Co-operation for Strengthening EU-China Toys Safety between the Directorate-General for Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission, the Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection of the European Commission and the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China (September 2006). These bilateral dialogues will be pursued further and intensified.*

There are already concrete results achieved from reinforced cooperation using modern methods and tools such as the RAPEX rapid alert information exchanges between the EU and China and the CPSC-AQSIQ Manufacturer Notification Procedure.

III. The Tripartite participants agree that joint activity to ensure consumer product safety among them as major trading partners has opened a new field of cooperation. The Tripartite participants recognize the need to continue to communicate on important consumer product safety issues, coordinate wherever practical in taking measures for consumer product safety management, and to consider trends and directions in international consumer product safety management as they review domestic policies. The Tripartite participants put special emphasis on associating the stakeholders to the relevant activity.

IV. The Tripartite participants agree that investment in education and training for product manufacturers, designers, importers, and retailers is a prerequisite to allow them to fully comply with product safety rules and standards, and thus ensure a high level of product safety for consumers. The outreach and training activities we are conducting in China for toys, electrical products, and textiles are part of our joint efforts in this regard.

V. The Tripartite participants affirmed that unified international consumer product safety standards can be beneficial to consumers and should be pursued where practical, while recognizing that the differentiated needs of the participants' own consumers may necessitate unique requirements. With a view toward facilitating effective implementation and enforcement of product safety rules and improved cooperation in this field, the Tripartite participants believe that comparing consumer product safety standards, as will be done during the upcoming outreach seminars, helps promote better understanding.

VI. The Tripartite participants will consider a second "Joint U.S.-EU-China Initiative on Consumer Product Safety Compliance" at an appropriate time, if a tripartite consultation deems it useful.

VII. The Tripartite participants will hold a "High-Level Consumer Product Safety Trilateral Meeting" in November 2008 in Brussels in the context of the EU Product Safety Week.