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Future of the footwear industry in the EU

The European footwear industry has been undertaking in recent years an important task of restructuring to face growing globalisation. It has made continuous efforts in R&D, design, environment, use of ICT, and cooperation with enterprises from other countries, in areas as important as production and commercialisation, as well as in producing articles of quality and fashion. This makes the European footwear industry a competitive one.

Nevertheless competitiveness has to be on a fair basis, which is not the case with the imports coming from China and Vietnam, where prices of products in the European market in some cases do not cover the costs of the raw materials. Dumping is an internationally condemned trade practice and China, having become member of the WTO, should respect its rules.

The official data published by the Commission show an increase of imports of 700% during the first four months of this year compared with figures for the same period last year. The Commission initiated a double monitoring system through its Regulation (CE) No. 117/2005(1), which entered into force on 1 February 2005. In the light of those data:

What practical measures is the Commission planning to take to face the clearly unfair competition derived from China's insufficient application of the WTO rules?

Could the Commission clarify which legislative framework and what trade defence measures it intends to adopt with regard to the problems raised by the spectacular increase of footwear imports from China?

(1) OJ L 24, 27.1.2005, p. 8.