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Heraeus calls for maintaining free competition in solar modules and photovoltaics products

- Dr. Frank Heinrich: "Import duties distort competition."

Heraeus, the Hanau-based precious metals and technology Group, believes the European Union should reject the recently-filed complaint that seeks the introduction of import duties on solar modules manufactured in China. "Heraeus has always supported preserving free trade without protectionist government intervention. In this instance as well, we regard the attempt to impose import duties on solar modules made in China as clearly interfering with the rules of free competition," said Dr. Frank Heinrich, Chairman of the Heraeus Holding GmbH Board of Management. Should a trade war between the European Union and China result, it would cause further harm to companies across Europe's solar industry, he added.

"While a few companies have expressed interest in creating a situation comparable to the one in the United States—where the U.S. Department of Commerce recently imposed tariffs of up to 250 percent on solar imports from China—this suggestion is counterproductive. Regulation would amount to a distortion of competition, with only a short-term gain. In the long run, no company benefits from state protectionism," Heinrich said.

"The key to maintaining a competitive edge lies in innovation, not government intervention, and only a company's innovations ensure the continued success it needs to thrive in the competitive arena. That is why Heraeus has a long history of close cooperation with companies in the photovoltaics industry," said Heinrich. All of the company's products, including the silver conductive pastes used in solar modules, are continually improved. "We work hand in hand with solar cell manufacturers, and because most production is done locally, we have become part of the value added chain in China," he explained.

Heraeus, the precious metals and technology group headquartered in Hanau, Germany, is a global, private company with over 160 years of tradition. Our fields of competence include precious metals, materials and technologies; sensors; biomaterials and medical products, as well as dental products, quartz glass, and specialty light sources. With product revenues of €4.8 billion and precious metal trading revenues of €21.3 billion, as well as more than 13,300 employees in more than 120 subsidiaries worldwide, Heraeus holds a leading position in its global markets.

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