



Summary of Key News

- **U.S. tariff regime reset (7 Aug):** Country-specific “reciprocal” tariffs formally took effect, while the White House simultaneously adjusted timelines and carve-outs. Chip imports face an elevated regime and companies continue to restructure supply chains around the new rules. Some trading partners have paused retaliation while talks continue.
- **China pause extended:** The U.S. carried forward a 90-day pause on further tariff escalations vis-à-vis China while side agreements and enforcement mechanisms continue to evolve.
- **Supply chains adjust in real time:** Carriers rolled out new surcharges and network changes, DHL reported Q2 results with tariff and demand commentary, and Maersk issued fresh market guidance.
- **A new FTA signed:** Indonesia and Peru concluded a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) on 11 Aug, opening immediate market access on a large share of bilateral trade.
- **FDI keeps flowing (select highlights):** New cross-border investments and expansions were announced in Asia (notably Vietnam and India), even as some metrics show cautious sentiment in parts of ASEAN.
- **Digital trade momentum:** 24/7 tokenized financing pilots for U.S. Treasuries moved from labs to live environments; Payoneer announced 24/7 transfers built on bank blockchain rails; Hong Kong’s new stablecoin law took effect (1 Aug) with stringent KYC.
- **Disputes & enforcement:** A new ICSID case was registered; WTO published its annual report and updated outlook; the U.S. DOJ and BIS continued a visible enforcement posture on customs/tariff fraud and export controls.

TARIFFS — RULES, RECALIBRATIONS, AND COUNTER-MOVES

What changed on 7 August?

The United States transitioned to a codified set of country-specific “reciprocal” tariff rates. Logistics advisories, carrier notices, and policy briefings all flagged 7 August 2025 as the date when the updated rates took legal effect (after an earlier 1 August target was deferred by a week). The structure includes differentiated baselines by trading partner and product family, and works in parallel with pre-existing regimes (e.g., USMCA eligibility still zero-rates qualifying goods). Practical impacts felt immediately:

- **Entry filings & classification:** Importers faced new line-item steps (HTS annotations for country-specific add-ons; careful separation of baseline, safeguard/Section adders, and preference claims).
- **Cash-flow & landed cost modelling:** Finance teams updated duty accruals and pricing; many firms accelerated pre-August shipments, front-loading inventories in late July and early August.
- **Carrier response:** Ocean carriers announced congestion/war-risk and GRIs in several trades, while parcel integrators published tariff explainers for shippers.

Semiconductors & electronics:

Semiconductor-related imports drew the sharpest policy attention. API-level guidance and press reports noted an effective move to 100% tariffs on certain chip categories, catalyzing additional shifts in sourcing and licensing. In parallel, leading U.S. chip customers and suppliers adjusted commercial terms around China-bound AI chip flows (with reporting of unusual revenue-share or licensing constructs for restricted sales) as part of a broader effort to square export controls with market realities.

China, EU and the “pause” button:

Washington extended a 90-day pause on additional tariff escalation toward China while negotiations continue. Europe, for its part, has modulated its own

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counter-measures calendar, at least temporarily, amid active dialogue on EV-related measures and reciprocal tariff stacking questions. The WTO trimmed its 2025 trade outlook compared with pre-tariff scenarios, citing the weight of these country-specific U.S. measures.

Asia's calibration:

Southeast Asian governments continued to seek clarity on U.S. reciprocal rates and exemptions, framing the new regime as both a headwind and an opportunity for supply-chain diversification. Separate bilateral understandings (e.g., Japan-U.S., Philippines-U.S., Malaysia-U.S.) featured headline tariff numbers and side letters on purchases and investment pledges, though several details remained in flux during the week.

Takeaway for operators:

- ◉ Re-cost landed prices by supplier, Incoterms, and eligibility (preference, origin shifts, tariff engineering).
- ◉ Re-map your export control risk checks (chips, dual-use, new end-user licenses).
- ◉ Watch for *de minimis* changes hitting cross-border e-commerce parcels at month-end.
- ◉ Expect further clarifications (and litigation risk) around stacking and scope, especially where multiple legal authorities (e.g., 301, 232, 201, "reciprocal") intersect.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) – FRESH ANNOUNCEMENTS & SIGNALS

Below are select cross-border developments relevant to trade and supply chains. (We highlight the host country's investment promotion authority (IPA) for reference and aftercare.)

Vietnam – European R&D inflow:

- ◉ **Host IPA:** Ministry of Planning & Investment (MPI) / Foreign Investment Agency (FIA) and local HCMC Investment & Trade Promotion Centre (ITPC).
- ◉ **What happened:** A major German software firm announced a €150m, multi-year R&D center in Ho Chi Minh City, with several hundred high-skilled roles slated by 2027. The announcement complements Vietnam's strong year-to-date FDI momentum and underlines the country's growing software and enterprise-tech footprint.

India – Japanese expansion and electronics capacity:

- ◉ **Host IPA:** Invest India (national), plus state IPAs such as Invest Telangana and Guidance Tamil Nadu.
- ◉ **What happened (week of 5-12 Aug):**
 - Toshiba Transmission & Distribution Systems (India) unveiled a fresh ₹562 crore (~US\$67m) expansion program in Telangana, with new core processing and surge arrester lines and an EHV transformer capacity boost.
 - A JSW-JFE joint venture outlined further CRGO electrical steel capacity expansions (announced just before our weekly window; still moving this week through state and environmental compliance steps).
 - India's securities regulator SEBI signaled additional simplification for foreign portfolio investors—a tailwind for capital inflows and potential brownfield FDI via capital markets channels tied to manufacturing and infrastructure issuers.

Indonesia & wider ASEAN – recalibration under tariffs:

- **Host IPA:** BKPM / Ministry of Investment (Indonesia), plus national IPAs across ASEAN.
- **What happened:** With tariff headwinds, ASEAN governments have pivoted to balance near-shoring into the U.S. (through additional purchases/investments) against maintaining Asian manufacturing competitiveness. New deals and side-letters emphasize U.S. capital goods and energy purchases (not strictly FDI), but are intended to preserve factory orders and support export-linked FDI already committed or in the pipeline.

Signals & cautions:

- ◉ Indonesia's latest quarterly FDI data showed softness, suggesting approvals and greenfield timelines are lengthening in sensitive sectors (e.g., autos/EV) during tariff readjustments.
- ◉ In Europe, utilities and industrials announced sizable multi-year investment programs—some domestic, but with implications for cross-border services, inputs, and equipment trade.

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Action points for investors/exporters:

- Use IPAs for aftercare (permits, workforce, suppliers), not just entry.
- Pair tariff modelling with double-tax, PLI-type incentive mapping; many hosts are sweetening capex terms.
- Track local content and rules of origin carefully where FTA utilization will matter (see Indonesia-Peru CEPA, below).

TECHNOLOGY IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Data-first sourcing & compliance (ADAMftd, Trezix):

- ADAMftd provides trade intelligence across customs declarations and shipping documents covering roughly 80% of global trade, enabling users to identify importers/exporters, screen counterparties, and simulate tariff outcomes rapidly.
- Trezix is an Indian origin platform designed to digitalize trade documentation, integrate with customs brokers, and automate compliance (origin, classification, licensing) across the shipment life-cycle—from purchase order to final clearance.

Together, these tools illustrate how firms are coping with fast-moving tariff schedules and origin questions by anchoring decisions in verifiable shipment data and systematizing the doc stack (from commercial invoices to eBLs).

Digital rails for trade & finance:

- Tokenized repo with U.S. Treasuries moved from proof-of-concept to live transactions on institutional networks, demonstrating 24/7 collateral mobility that can shorten settlement windows for trade finance liquidity.
- Payoneer + Citi announced always-on, block-chain-enabled intracompany transfers—relevant for treasury teams funding overseas subsidiaries and supplier prepayments around the clock.
- Hong Kong's stablecoin law (effective 1 Aug) imposes robust KYC duties on issuers and intermediaries, shaping cross-border payments policy in a major Asian hub.
- Regulators, market venues, and crypto-native firms continue to debate tokenized securities and round-the-clock trading; expect spillovers into digital LCs, eUCP workflows, and trade asset distribution.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS (FTAS)

Newly signed (last week):

- Indonesia-Peru CEPA (11 Aug 2025, Jakarta). The agreement immediately zero-rates a major portion of bilateral trade (Peru cites 56% of lines tariff-free at entry into force, moving toward ~86% over staged periods). Both governments framed the CEPA as opening Andean and ASEAN gateways for food, mining inputs, energy transition goods, and services. Final texts and schedules are pending publication; authorities also flagged next-phase talks on services/investment annexes.

Entered into force / ratifications:

- None newly in force were formally recorded in the window of 5-12 Aug apart from WTO-related accessions/acceptances (outside strict FTA scope). If you rely on preferences, continue to check WTO RTA and national gazettes for legal effect dates.

SUPPLY CHAIN & LOGISTICS

Carriers & surcharges:

- CMA CGM issued fresh surcharge notices across trades (war risk, congestion, low-water), reflecting cost pressures and reroutings. Expect rolling GRIs and service pattern changes as lines rebalance capacity.
- MSC updated customer advisories and introduced a new standalone U.S.-Africa service (13 Aug post-date) while pruning some Transpac capacity earlier this summer—confirming that networks remain fluid around demand and tariff timing.
- Maersk issued a market update focused on consumer demand, inventory pulls, and spot rate dynamics for Asia-Europe and Transpac lanes.

Integrators & parcels:

- DHL Group reported Q2 results with parcel/B2B commentary, noting tariff-linked demand shaping and sectoral differences.
- UPS and advisory partners published importer playbooks on the 2025 tariff environment; shippers should mirror those checklists against their HS portfolios.

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Macro volumes and timing:

- U.S. import volumes stayed elevated through the first half as shippers front-loaded before tariffs; multiple forecasters expect H2 softness as inventories carry over and higher duties bite.

Operational watch-outs:

- De minimis changes (end-August) will raise costs on low-value e-commerce parcels; expect platform policy updates and potential seller migration to bonded or DDP flows.
- Port-specific legal and casualty fallout continues (e.g., court-ordered vessel arrests in India tied to earlier incidents)—a reminder to review marine liability and cargo insurance coverage.

TRADE-BASED MONEY LAUNDERING (TBML), COUNTERFEITING & ENFORCEMENT

Customs/tariff fraud focus:

- The U.S. DOJ resolved a \$6.8m False Claims Act matter tied to unpaid customs duties on PRC-origin resin, and legal advisories emphasized that tariff evasion has moved near the top of enforcement priorities.
- Policy memos and law-firm alerts point to more FCA whistleblower activity against importers misdeclaring value, origin, or HTS classification—especially where multiple tariff programs now interact.
- Export-control enforcement remains intense (including China-related dual-use controls), with BIS publishing regular settlement stories and charging documents.

Practical steps:

- Tighten supplier affidavits, bills of materials, and country-of-origin logic (especially where processing confers or does not confer origin).
- Document your reasonable care procedures and maintain audit trails that survive a subpoena.
- For TBML specifically, match trade flows to financial flows—and use shipment-level data to flag over/under-invoicing, phantom consignments, and circular trades.

E-COMMERCE, TRADE FINANCE & DIGITAL TRADE

Always-on liquidity & tokenization:

- Institutional tokenized repo with U.S. Treasuries went live on production-grade networks—an enabling step for 24/7 intraday liquidity that can bleed into trade receivable financing and FX for shipments and inventory finance.
- Payoneer + Citi announced bank-grade, blockchain-enabled 24/7 intracompany transfers—useful for global sellers funding fulfillment centers and settling supplier payments across time zones.

Platform dynamics & regulation:

- Hong Kong's stablecoin regime took effect (1 Aug), signaling a conservative approach on KYC and wallet rules; this will reverberate across cross-border merchant settlement and on/off-ramps.
- Social commerce platforms continue to navigate market-entry, ban risks, staffing, and tariff/parcel changes in the U.S. and SE Asia.
- In the EU/UK, the legal plumbing for electronic trade documents (eBLs, warehouse receipts, etc.) continues to mature; additional EU members advanced MLETR-style bills, smoothing digital trade finance adoption.

DISPUTES, ARBITRATION & CASE LAW

Investment arbitration:

- ICSID registered new proceedings the week of 5-12 Aug (including a case involving the UK), adding to a busy energy and natural-resources docket this year. Energy disputes elsewhere (e.g., Africa) continue to enter international arbitration channels as fiscal terms, taxes, and local-content measures shift post-tariffs.

WTO & multilateral:

- The WTO released its 2025 Annual Report and updated projections, highlighting the demand and policy-uncertainty drag from the latest tariff architecture.
- DSB updates show a steady pipeline of new panel requests (EV, safeguards, origin issues), with members increasingly pairing bilateral “mini-

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deals" with dispute filings or targeted retaliatory authority in reserve.

Court developments:

- National courts remained active on admiralty (post-casualty claims), customs (duty evasion indictments/pleas), and sanctions (export-control violations)—all with direct trade operations impact.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 3rd Dairy Market Innovation Asia Pacific Summit 2025 – 25-26 Sep 2025, Singapore.
 - Website: Asian Dairy Conference page (organizer listing).
- Industrial Transformation ASIA-PACIFIC (ITAP) – 15-17 Oct 2025, Singapore.
 - Website: industrial-transformation.com
- Intermodal Europe – 21-23 Oct 2025, Spain.
 - Website: intermodal-events.com/europe
- transport logistic Southeast Asia (tlacSEA) – 29-31 Oct 2025, Singapore. Status:
 - Website: transportlogisticsea.com

- Oil & Gas Annual Conference & Expo 2025 – 28-29 Nov 2025, India. Status:
 - Website: indiaoge.com
- Ras Al-Khaimah Investment & Business Summit – 19-20 Nov 2025, UAE.
 - Website: rakinvestmentsummit.com
- Go Global Awards – 18-19 Nov 2025.
 - Websites: uktrademission.org | goglobalawards.org
- transport logistic China – 24-26 Jun 2026.
 - Website: transportlogistic-china.com

NEW & NOTABLE PUBLICATIONS

- *The Great Trade Reboot: Harnessing Compliance (International Trade Council)*. Now available on Amazon.
- Ongoing updates from WTO (Annual Report; fisheries subsidies accessions) provide useful baselines for policy and dispute tracking.



RECENT GLOBAL TARIFF TOOL IMPLEMENTATIONS

Export Barbados / <https://exportbarbados.org>

Green Transport Cluster / <https://gtcluster.eu/customs-tariffs>

Interstellar Communication Holdings Inc / <https://www.dgipl.com/ic/trade-tool.html>

Invest Guatemala / <https://investguatemala.com/global-tariffs-and-rules>

Lithuanian Confederation of Industrialists / <https://lpk.lt/muitu-tarifu-paieska>

Ramporrt / <https://ramporrt.com/global-tariffs-and-rules-lookup>

South African Youth Trade Association / <https://sayta.co.za/global-tariff-lookup-tool>