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ITAA Supports U.S. Trade in Services Initial Offer

Arlington, VA - The Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) today voiced strong support for the United States Trade Representative's submission of its initial offer on market access in the services sector to the World Trade Organization. In submitting the initial offer, the USTR made the March 31, 2003 deadline for trade in services submissions established by the Doha Declaration for WTO member governments to progressively liberalize trade in services, as required under the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

"Services are what most Americans do for a living, and IT services form the keystone of the ICT industry", said ITAA President Harris N. Miller. "Opening markets for these services benefit not only companies directly engaged in these services, but also those engaged in other segments of the industry. Expanding business in these areas provides additional business for hardware companies because new applications generally require additional hardware to operate. Expanding applications also require additional telecommunications capacity and infrastructure. Thus, by expanding commitments in this area, a range of sectors benefit."

"Generally, many countries made commitments in these services in the Uruguay Round", said ITAA Senior Vice President for Global Affairs Allen Z. Miller. "There were a number of key countries, however, that made either no commitments or only partial commitments. By being on the forefront with its trade offer, the U.S. will be in a strong position to negotiate full market access and national treatment in all Computer and Related Services in those countries."

The Information Technology Association of America (ITAA) provides global public policy, business networking, and national leadership to promote the continued rapid growth of the IT industry. ITAA consists of over 400 corporate members throughout the U.S., and a global network of 49 countries' IT associations. The Association plays the leading role in issues of IT industry concern including information security, taxes and finance policy, digital intellectual property protection, telecommunications competition, workforce and education, immigration, online privacy and consumer protection, government IT procurement, human resources and e-commerce policy. ITAA members range from the smallest IT start-ups to industry leaders in the Internet, software, IT services, ASP, digital content, systems integration, telecommunications, and enterprise solution fields. For more information visit www.itaa.org.