

U.S.: China must 'crack down' on piracy

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The Chinese government must "crack down" on piracy and enforce intellectual-property rights, the top U.S. trade official said Monday in Beijing.

"China must act vigorously to address intellectual property infringement," U.S. Trade Representative Rob Portman said during a news conference in Beijing. "The piracy not only deprives U.S. companies of their ability to participate in the Chinese market, it also affects them worldwide."

Portman said that while China has taken steps to comply with its World Trade Organization accession agreement, "it still falls short in a number of areas." China acceded to the WTO in 2001.

"We think China has made a lot of strides since 2001 and they deserve credit for that, but in some other areas there's still more to go in terms of meeting their WTO commitments," said Portman.

The U.S. trade chief cited intellectual property and direct sales as two key areas where the Chinese government needed to make more progress in order to meet full WTO compliance. Portman said that protection against piracy and counterfeiting would be a sign of a mature economy.

"It's very difficult to see China taking the next step in terms of its economic development without providing more protection for intellectual property," Portman said.

While the United States has been adamant about China complying with its WTO obligations, Portman explained the direct benefit of compliance would be to the Chinese economy, not the United States.

"The bigger loser is not the U.S. It is actually the Chinese economy and Chinese innovators, entrepreneurs, artists, authors, singers. This is something that we need to see more progress on," said Portman.

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