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Plastics and Rubber Machinery Manufacturers across Europe affected by poor Market Surveillance

Imports of plastics and rubber machinery into the EU from China have been increasing in recent years. In particular, a growing number of European plastics converters buy Chinese injection moulding machines intended for non-high-tech applications, because of the favourable price/quality rate. Plastics and rubber machinery are professional products that are subject to the requirements of the Machinery Directive and to the corresponding standards that are prepared by CEN/TC 145. Unfortunately, the EU domestic market surveillance of plastics and rubber machinery markets is not sufficient and there are barely any controls, in order to verify whether the imported products truly fulfil the essential safety requirements of the relevant Directives and whether the CE marking has been lawfully affixed.

Some checks made by the Italian Customs authorities – in agreement with the Italian Association, EUROMAP Member – highlighted that the EC declarations of conformity issued by the Chinese branch offices of very well-known European notified bodies are often not properly used by Chinese exporters, in particular with reference to the application of standard EN 201: 1997 on injection moulding machines. This unfortunate situation seems to arise from the lack of detailed knowledge of European standards by the Chinese manufacturers as well as branch-offices of European notified bodies. As a result, it harms both the health and safety of workers and the competitiveness of Italian and other European manufacturers that abide in full to the applicable EU legislation and its costly conformity assessment procedures.