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Title	<i>U.S., Europe, Canada groups press Japan on postal privatisation</i>

Ten U.S., European and Canadian industry associations issued a joint statement Friday urging Japan to ensure “equal footing” with private-sector competitors when it privatizes postal entities.

“We join together to urge the legislation being considered include a clear, unambiguous commitment to the achievement of equal footing for all market participants prior to the marketing by Japan Post’s surviving entities of any new or altered products,” the statement said.

The equal footing “means that the existing privileges of the postal entities are removed, including those that pertain to taxes and government policy guarantees,” it said.

The groups also called for imposing Financial Services Agency regulations on “kampo” insurance and savings entities to be privatized “to the same extent and under the same terms and conditions as apply to private-sector competitors.”

The American Council of Life Insurers said the statement will be delivered to Heizo Takenaka, minister in charge of postal privatization.

The statement includes the Association of British Insurers, the European Federation of National Insurance Associations, the Council of the European Business Community in Japan, the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association, and five U.S. groups: the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan, the American Insurance Association, the Coalition of Service Industries, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the U.S.-Japan Business Council.