



UNITED STATES COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

Peter M. Robinson  
President & CEO

September 11, 2009

Ambassador Ron Kirk  
United States Trade Representative  
600 17th St. NW  
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

As the Administration continues to work for positive outcomes in the ongoing World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round and international climate negotiations, we wish to underscore the critical importance of lowering and removing trade barriers to innovative and environmentally-friendly technologies, goods and services. We appreciate the U.S. leadership role in this regard in the WTO and the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). We agree with the Administration that lowering and removing barriers to trade in “green” technologies, goods and services benefits the environment and the economy in the U.S. and around the world. In our view, the technologies in question are quite broad, and include environmentally sound, energy efficient and renewable technologies.

U.S. businesses and the global environment would certainly benefit from the elimination of disproportionately high tariffs and non-tariff barriers now facing U.S. exporters of such technologies, goods and services in important export markets. USCIB’s April 22 letter to Secretary Chu emphasized that lowering trade barriers would help spur global economic recovery, provide business opportunities for U.S. companies and stimulate U.S. jobs, while also advancing environmental progress.

We urge you to continue to pursue a multilateral agreement to reduce or eliminate trade barriers on environmental goods and services in the WTO Doha Development Round. However, if the multilateral route proves unworkable, we then ask you to consider concluding a plurilateral agreement at the WTO, which would bring with it broad international coverage and measures to enforce commitments. Any such agreement should seek to include a critical mass of major emitting economies. We believe other intergovernmental processes, such as the Forum on Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the Major Economies Forum (MEF) can all play supportive roles encouraging such a WTO outcome.

As the U.S. advances this important agenda in the WTO, it should also work to counter barriers to trade in all applicable forums, notably in the international climate change negotiations. The United Nations, the G8 and G20, the MEF, and other bilateral and regional forums should recognize trade as an indispensable avenue for the transfer of innovative technologies to developing countries that will help them address challenges of climate change mitigation and adaptation. U.S. negotiators in the UNFCCC should encourage lowering trade barriers on climate-friendly technologies, goods and services to facilitate technology deployment, and oppose any proposed trade barriers and measures under the UNFCCC. Promoting such trade expansion and protecting intellectual property rights in such technologies, goods and services are fundamental to preserving incentives for U.S. business investment in developing new solutions to environmental challenges. As noted

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above, it is important to recognize that climate friendly technologies encompass a comprehensive slate of products, processes and services that improve efficiency and lower emissions, from energy production and use, agriculture and land use and other significant areas of the economy that go well beyond some traditional views of green or environmentally friendly technologies.

It is equally vital to pursue lowering and avoiding trade barriers in this area at the domestic level. Thus far, congressional efforts to encourage the export of clean technology, for example through the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009, have dedicated more attention to erecting, instead of lowering, trade barriers. A better approach would be to explicitly support global trade in more environmentally-friendly technologies, goods and services. We hope that you and the Administration will work with Congress to lower trade barriers; this will help reinforce and make more credible for the international community U.S. support for lowering green tariffs and opening trade in support of technological solutions.

USCIB promotes open markets, competitiveness and innovation, sustainable development and corporate responsibility, supported by international engagement and prudent regulation. Its members include top U.S.-based global companies and professional services firms from every sector of our economy, with operations in every region of the world. With a unique global network encompassing leading international business organizations, such as the International Chamber of Commerce and the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD, USCIB provides business views to policy makers and regulatory authorities worldwide, and works to facilitate international trade and investment.

We look forward to working with you to amplify and support your efforts to achieve reinforcing and positive results in the WTO and UNFCCC in the coming months, and to engaging other international organizations to work in alignment to support this effort. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,  
  
Peter M. Robinson

Cc: Steven Chu, Secretary of Energy  
Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State  
Timothy Geithner, Secretary of Treasury  
Gary Locke, Secretary of Commerce  
Lisa Jackson, EPA Administrator