

March 23, 2015

The Honorable Ambassador Michael Froman
United States Trade Representative
Executive Office of the President
600 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Ambassador Froman:

The United States Council for International Business would like to congratulate you on the United States submitting its letter regarding full implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement to the World Trade Organization. We applaud you and USTR for leading the U.S. and being one of the first countries to submit its letter of acceptance of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. The United States serves as an example to other countries at the World Trade Organization in ensuring entry into force and implementation as work has moved to the national capitals.

The swift implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement is critical for the business community. The agreement will decrease inefficiency, cut release time for goods at the border, spur economic growth and enhance national competitiveness at a time when supply chains routinely cross multiple borders in the production of goods and services. The OECD estimates that full implementation of the agreement could reduce costs for low-income countries by an estimated 15 percent.

We believe it is critically important that other WTO members adopt ambitious national implementation schedules. This will entail properly identifying what articles should be placed in categories A, B and C, and seeking technical assistance and capacity-building when needed. Countries need to have a realistic sense of what their capabilities will be regarding training, building single window systems, and coordinating with other countries through mutual recognition agreements (MRAs) and authorized economic operator (AEO) programs. We ask USTR and the U.S. Government more broadly to continue pushing this message.

We hope that USTR and other government agencies will continue to leverage the private sector's expertise to press for complete ratification, and take advantage of our ability and willingness to train and assist countries. The global economy, countries and business cannot afford for the agreement to lose momentum; entry into force must occur as soon as possible.

The private sector – in particular USCIB and the International Chamber of Commerce – stands ready to aid in ratification and implementation of the TFA. We will work with USTR, USAID, CBP, DHS, the State Department, the World Bank and many other agencies and organizations as the agreement moves forward, and we look forward to strengthening these partnerships.

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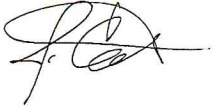
Global Business Leadership as the U.S. Affiliate of:
International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)
International Organization of Employers (IOE)
Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC) to the OECD
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Again, we applaud you for your swiftness in submitting your letter. The United States is playing a critical leadership role in implementation of the TFA and can count on the full support of the business community.

Sincerely,



Peter M. Robinson
President and CEO
United States Council for International Business



Jerry Cook
Vice President Government and Trade Relations
Hanesbrands, Inc.
Chairman, USCIB Customs and Trade Facilitation Committee

CC:

Secretary of State John Kerry
Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker
Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson
U.S. Customs and Border Protection Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske
U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Rajiv Shah
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means Chairman Paul Ryan
U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means Ranking Member Sandy Levin
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Chairman Orrin Hatch
U.S. Senate Committee on Finance Ranking Member Ron Wyden