

7 May 2014

Mr Panagiotis Mitarachi
Deputy Minister for Development and Competitiveness
Ministry for Development and Competitiveness
Hellenic Republic
Nikis Street
10180 Athens
Greece

Dear Minister,

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) agreement will create a new era in transatlantic economic and political cooperation and play an important role in boosting the economies on both continents and worldwide. The American Chamber of Commerce to the European Union (AmCham EU) urges the EU trade ministers meeting in Brussels on Thursday 8 May to re-emphasise the importance of this agreement and encourage negotiators on both sides of the Atlantic to intensify their efforts to achieve an ambitious and comprehensive agreement. We hope that significant progress with concrete results can already be achieved by year-end.

The economic benefits of a TTIP agreement could be significant and lead to increased trade, greater growth and, more importantly, the creation of new jobs. A central component is not only the elimination of tariffs but also non-tariff measures such as regulatory differences and trade restrictions between the EU and US.

The transatlantic economy is rich and diverse and governed by a myriad of complex standards, certifications, licensing and technical specifications. Companies active in the EU and US are often confronted with duplicative and inconsistent regulatory requirements across a wide range of areas. These lead to unnecessary cost increases and make transatlantic firms less competitive in the global market place. A common approach to regulation and standards would lead to important cost reductions for companies in sectors including chemicals, medical devices, energy technology, transportation and pharmaceuticals, and would in turn benefit consumers. There is a real need for transatlantic regulatory cooperation and coherence in most, if not all, industrial sectors.

The EU and US should also endeavour to increase transparency in their rule making and give stakeholders additional opportunities to comment on proposed primary and secondary legislation. Transparency alone will not generate sufficient transatlantic regulatory coherence. There is also greater need for an institutional framework for transatlantic cooperation to reduce or eliminate unnecessary regulatory divergence.

Setting up an institutional mechanism for future regulatory cooperation is necessary. This mechanism should enforce commonly accepted principles and regulatory best practices in a wide variety of sectors, drive outcomes and be held accountable with political oversight. Basing the institutional mechanism on common principles is essential, avoiding a 'one size fits all' approach in this complex area. The sharing of common principles is a necessary tool to fall back on in trying to address future regulatory differences.

Agreeing on concrete processes to foster mutual recognition and other forms of cooperation for regulation and standard setting should be a key priority. This approach will allow the development of regulatory tools (databases, education) and also accelerate implementation and adoption. Mutual

recognition of high standards will stimulate growth for businesses, both large and small, on both sides of the Atlantic, as well as provide greater choice for consumers and suppliers. TTIP cannot eliminate all regulatory divergences immediately, and AmCham EU is not advocating for de-regulation. Regulatory protections are often the result of political decisions that reflect views on risk and scientific uncertainty. However, there are many areas where the standards and levels of protections between the EU and US are similar, equivalent or equal, but where the implementation or the manner in which these standards are achieved is different.

Despite the recent economic and financial crisis, the EU and US remain each other's most important markets. Aggregate total investment in Europe totals €2 trillion and roughly 15 million jobs are based on this economic partnership. Interestingly, since 2000 more than 50 percent of all US foreign direct investment (FDI) was made in Europe. Successful negotiation for a TTIP agreement would only strengthen this relationship and serve as a multiplier for FDI to the EU.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Hendrik Bourgeois". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Hendrik" and last name "Bourgeois" clearly legible.

Hendrik Bourgeois
Chair
American Chamber of Commerce to the European Union