



European-American
Business Council

***EABC Supports Expansion of the
WTO Information Technology Agreement
to Promote Jobs & Growth***

February 23, 2012

The European-American Business Council (EABC) is an alliance of 71 US, EU and Canadian-based companies. We are committed to increasing Trans-Atlantic investment, innovation and integration through competitive policies and regulatory collaboration.

Economic growth and job creation are enhanced when trade partners reduce barriers to trade and investment. They are also enhanced by the expanded commercial use of IT -- hardware, software and services. The EABC views the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) as an example of the gains in productivity, employment and innovation that are possible through trade agreements. When the ITA was created in 1997 there were 29 signatories covering 83% of global IT trade. Today, there are 73 signatories representing 97% of global IT trade. Information technology trade increased at an average annual rate of 10% from 1996 to 2008.

The EABC believes ITA expansion, both in products and countries, will enhance North American and European economic growth and exports. ITA expansion will widen and deepen the positive impact of this important WTO agreement.

The EABC recommends that the ITA remain a tariff-only agreement. We support the ITA declaration to periodically review non-tariff barriers, and we suggest that governments continue to discuss non-tariff barriers on a case-by-case basis across every sector. However, to preserve clarity of focus and timely expansion we support the preservation of the ITA as a tariff-only agreement.

We commend the United States and European Union governments for their interest in the expansion of the ITA. Since its establishment this agreement has brought tremendous economic growth through increased trade of ITA covered products. We are committed to working with the US and EU to expand this agreement.

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