



Armenian National Committee of America
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

June 11, 2010

The Honorable Ron Kirk
United States Trade Representative
Office of the United States Trade Representative
600 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20508

Dear Ambassador Kirk:

I am writing to urge you, in the interest of fueling U.S. economic growth and strengthening our nation's bond with the Armenian people, to enter into formal discussions with the Republic of Armenia regarding the negotiation of a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

The establishment of such an bilateral agreement would build upon our current economic dialogue with Armenia. This type of discourse takes place today, in large measure, within the context of the U.S.-Armenia Joint Economic Task Force. A TIFA agreement would provide a broader, ongoing, and more consistent platform for our government to meet and consult with Armenian government officials regarding expanding our economic cooperation and exploring opportunities for trade and investment.

Armenia, as you know, has received Permanent Normal Trade Relations status and is a member in good standing of the World Trade Organization. Armenia's exceptional progress in establishing a modern, market-oriented economy, in the face of illegal blockades by both Turkey and Azerbaijan, has been consistently praised by the Wall Street Journal/Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom, which rates Armenia as among the freest economies among the states of the former Soviet Union.

continued

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Armenia is a partner with the United States in seeking regional peace, including through its full engagement in ongoing talks, mediated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, to resolve the Nagorno Karabagh conflict. The Armenian government sent troops to Iraq as part of our Coalition operations, deployed forces to Kosovo as part of the NATO peacekeeping efforts, and has sent a contingent of forces to Afghanistan in support of our military mission in that nation.

President Barack Obama, during his campaign for office, pledged that his Administration would “help foster Armenia’s growth and development through expanded trade and targeted aid, and by strengthening the commercial, political, military, developmental, and cultural relationships between the U.S. and Armenian governments.” The establishment of a TIFA would represent a concrete expression of the President’s commitment and a meaningful contribution to the trade and investment relationship between our two friendly nations.

I want to thank you for your consideration of our request and would very much appreciate your leadership in initiating discussions toward a U.S.-Armenia Trade and Investment Agreement. As always, we stand ready to meet with you and to assist you in all your efforts to broaden the U.S.-Armenia partnership.

Sincerely,



Kenneth V. Hachikian
Chairman