

International Trade UPDATE

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March 2007

Trade, Competitiveness, and Security Issues at the Forefront of North American Ministerial Meeting

The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America meeting in Ottawa, Canada, this February focused on common trade and border challenges as well as formulating a coordinated response to health and security threats.

BY JOHN WARD



At the SPP meeting in Ottawa, Canada, on February 23, 2007, Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez (left) met with (from left to right) Canadian Ministry of Industry Maxime Bernier, Mexican Secretary of the Economy Eduardo Sojo, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs Peter MacKay, Mexican Secretary of External Affairs Patricia Espinosa Castellano, Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff, Canadian Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day, and Mexican Secretary of the Interior Francisco Javier Ramirez Acuna. (U.S. Department of State photo).

Nine ministers from Canada, Mexico, and the United States, including Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, and Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff met in Ottawa, Canada, on February 23, 2007, to discuss trade and security issues among the three North Ameri-

can nations. The meeting was a part of the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP) that was launched by President Bush and his Canadian and Mexican counterparts in 2005.

In a statement, the ministers responsible for the SPP noted that they “recognize the importance of focusing on initiatives that will further competitiveness and quality of life in North America, and will continue to work together to successfully meet the security and prosperity challenges of the 21st century.”

Competitiveness a Vital Part of SPP Agenda

During the meeting, the ministers received the first report from the North American Competitiveness Council (NACC), *Enhancing Competitiveness in Canada, Mexico, and the United States*. The NACC was established in 2006 to bring greater private-sector engagement into the SPP process and to make specific recommendations regarding ways to increase North American competitiveness in the face of global competition.

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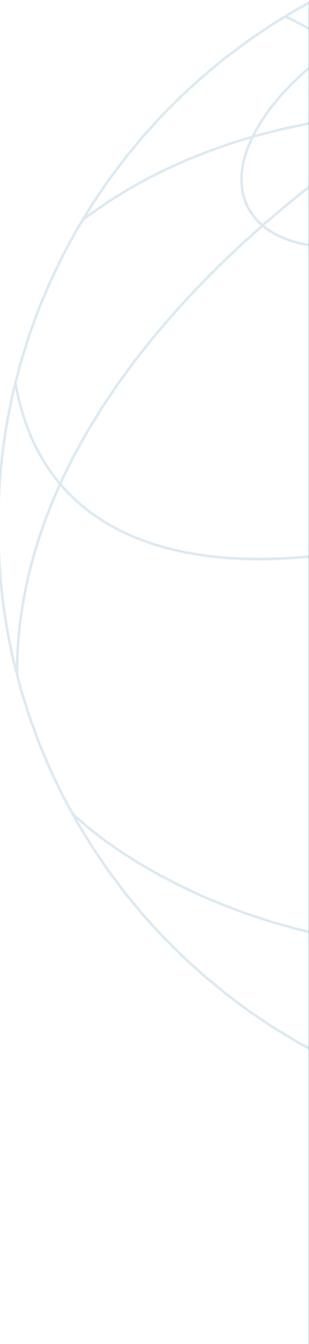


INTERNATIONAL
TRADE
ADMINISTRATION

Commerce Department Launches Initiative to Attract Foreign Investment

Inward investment in the United States is the target of a new federal initiative announced on March 7, 2007, in Washington, D.C.

BY JOHN WARD



The Commerce Department has launched a new U.S. government initiative to promote the United States as a destination for foreign investment. The initiative was announced on March 7, 2007, by Franklin L. Lavin, under secretary of commerce for international trade. The initiative, Invest in America, will be the primary mechanism by which the government manages the promotion of inward investment in the United States.

“The United States welcomes foreign investment and the jobs and prosperity it creates here,” said Lavin in a speech that day at the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, D.C. “We are seeing increasing global competition for investment flows, and we need to make sure that international investors understand the unique advantages of the United States, including the best workforce in the world.”

Lavin noted that the U.S. economy is among the most open in the world, but, until now, the federal government has played almost no role in attracting and retaining inward foreign investment. “All other major economies have mechanisms such as investment boards and investment promotion activities,” he remarked. “[The] historically passive role [of the United States] toward foreign direct investment is increasingly anachronistic.”

Importance to U.S. Economy

Inward investment, or foreign direct investment, plays an important role in the U.S. economy. Investment from foreign subsidiaries employs more than 5 million American workers. In 2004, the latest year for which data are available, U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms

spent \$29.9 billion on research and development activities in the United States. Investment capital represented more than 10 percent of the total U.S. business capital expenditures. In the manufacturing sector, that figure is even more important, representing 25 percent.

Key Responsibilities

The Invest in America initiative will be housed in the Commerce Department’s International Trade Administration (ITA). ITA will have three key responsibilities:

1. Conducting outreach to the international investment community
2. Serving as an ombudsman in Washington, D.C., for the concerns of the international investment community and working on policy issues that affect the attractiveness of the United States to foreign investment
3. Supporting state and local governments engaged in foreign investment promotion

The initiative will also include creating a task force within ITA that will be responsible for educating and coordinating the efforts of the 2,300 ITA employees in offices around the world on inward foreign investment.

Advantages of Doing Business in the United States

In announcing the new initiative, Lavin noted a number of factors that make the United States an attractive place to do business. Among those factors are

- Open, secure markets
- Low taxes that encourage innovation and investment
- An open society that attracts and retains top talent

- A high degree of transparency

The initiative would not affect the way the U.S. government addresses individual investments in the U.S. economy that might affect national security. Such investments will continue to be reviewed as appropriate by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), an interagency body established by executive order in 1975 and chaired by the secretary of the treasury. CFIUS reviews and investigates foreign acquisitions of U.S. companies that may threaten to impair U.S. national security. In rare circumstances, CFIUS can recommend that the president suspend or block such transactions so that any identified national security concerns can be addressed.

Coordination with State and Local Governments

Many state and municipal governments are already actively engaged in efforts to attract foreign investment, and the Invest in America initiative will complement those activities. The federal government will not steer prospective investors toward, or away from, any particular investment or investment location in the United States. "That part of the investment decision must be led by the localities," said Lavin, "The U.S. federal government should remain strictly neutral in any competition among sites within the United States. Our job is to promote the United States in general as a site for investment."

John Ward is a senior editor in the International Trade Administration's Office of Public Affairs. Aaron Brickman, director of the Invest in America initiative, assisted with this report.

For More Information

For additional information regarding the Invest in America initiative, visit www.investamerica.gov.

Foreign Investment in the United States

5 million: number of workers employed by U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms.

\$29.9 billion: amount spent by U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms on research and development.

10%: portion of U.S. business capital expenditures accounted for by U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms.

25%: portion of U.S. capital expenditures in the manufacturing sector accounted for by U.S. subsidiaries of foreign firms.

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. Figures are for 2004.

About the SPP

The SPP was launched in March 2005 at a meeting that President George W. Bush hosted at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. Attending that meeting were Paul Martin, then prime minister of Canada, and Vicente Fox, then president of Mexico. The three leaders launched the SPP by noting that “in a rapidly changing world, we must develop new avenues of cooperation that will make our open societies safer and more secure, our businesses more competitive, and our economies more resilient.”

This latest SPP meeting in Ottawa, Canada, was a follow-up to one held in Cancún, Mexico, in March 2006. At the 2006 meeting, the leaders identified five priorities for the SPP: (1) strengthening competitiveness through the creation of a private-sector-led competitiveness council and regulatory cooperation, (2) emergency management, (3) avian and pandemic influenza, (4) energy security, and (5) smart, secure borders.

In the United States, the SPP is a White House—led initiative, with the Department of Commerce coordinating the prosperity agenda and the Department of Homeland Security coordinating the security agenda. The State Department ensures the two are coordinated and is responsible for overall U.S. relations with the partner countries.

Trade and Competitiveness

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The NACC report outlines approximately 50 recommendations, providing time frames for implementation over the next few years. Among the recommendations of special relevance to international commerce and trade are:

- **Simplification of certain NAFTA rules** with respect to rules-of-origin and certification requirements
- **Implementation of a coordinated strategy on intellectual property rights**, by the establishment of industry-specific working groups and the development of a public-private initiative to tackle counterfeiting and piracy
- **Improvement of rules governing the movement of goods**, by simplifying and improving customs processes, liberalizing transport services, and eliminating withholding taxes on cross-border interest payments
- **Streamlining regulations**, by signing of a North American regulatory cooperation framework to ensure the consistent application of standards and regulatory requirements.

“By working together to make the most of the diverse strengths that Canada, Mexico, and the United States bring to the table,” notes the report, “we can once again forge ahead of the pack and show the rest of the world how much can be accomplished by three great nations.”

Sovereignty Respected

The NACC report to the SPP ministers outlines an agenda for cooperation among the three countries, while respecting the sovereignty, culture, laws, and regulations of each. The report notes, “[T]he recommendations of the NACC do not suggest any measure that would threaten the sovereignty of any of the three countries. The NACC simply sees huge potential for greater cooperation—in managing borders, regulation, energy, and many other issues affecting the quality of life of the citizens of Canada, Mexico, and the United States.”

Benefits for U.S. Trade and Safety

The United States stands to benefit from the SPP through more secure and efficient movement of legitimate goods, people, and services across our borders. The United States also benefits from increased cooperation and information-sharing in the areas of transportation, energy, e-commerce, manufactured goods, intellectual property rights, as well as health and consumer protections. For example, the three countries reached an agreement on advance notification when products violate safety standards or pose a danger, which could prevent injuries or even save lives. In addition, to reduce the cost of trade, the United States and Canada decreased transit times at the Detroit/Windsor gateway, our largest border crossing point, by 50 percent. The SPP further builds on efforts to protect the environment, combat infectious diseases and ensure a safe food supply. Ultimately, the SPP means a more secure and prosperous United States of America, with greater well-being for all Americans.

John Ward is a writer in the International Trade Administration's Office of Public Affairs. Aron Davidson, an international trade specialist with the ITA's Market Access and Compliance unit, assisted with this report.

For More Information

Information on the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America can be found on the Web at www.spp.gov. The report of the North American Competitiveness Council is available on the Web sites of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce at www.uschamber.com/issues/index/international/nacc.htm and the Council of the Americas at www.americas-society.org/coa/NACC/indexNACC.html.

Import Administration Helps Reel in Fish Duty Cheaters

Action by the Commerce Department's Import Administration is helping to ensure that U.S. producers of seafood products are not being undercut by unfair competition from abroad.

BY STEPHEN CLAEYS

During the past three years, the Commerce Department, through the Import Administration (IA), has been working to ensure that foreign producers of frozen fish fillets are not engaging in unfair or illegal market practices that harm U.S. producers. The department's efforts are an example of the critical trade policy role that IA plays both domestically and globally.

IA is a unit of the International Trade Administration. Its role is to enforce trade laws and agreements and to prevent unfairly traded imports. IA is also the lead federal agency responsible for developing and implementing policies and programs that counter unfair trade practices by foreign governments and companies.

Antidumping Order Issued

IA's efforts regarding the importing of frozen fish fillets from Vietnam began in August 2003, when it found that Vietnamese producers were engaged in dumping their products in the U.S. market. "Dumping" is the practice of selling exported goods below "normal value," which is either the cost of production or the price the product is normally sold for by the exporter in its own country. As a remedy, IA issued an antidumping duty order on frozen fillets produced from certain types of fish in Vietnam. The order assessed antidumping duties ranging from 36.84 to 63.88 percent of the value of the imported fish.

Investigation Finds Mislabeling

In October 2003, in response to reports from certain U.S. fish fillet processors, IA began an investigation into allegations that frozen fish subject to

the antidumping order were being mislabeled and exported to the United States. Producers sometimes use such tactics as a means of avoiding payment of antidumping duty cash deposits due on a product being imported.

After conducting an analysis of importing trends, IA began working with Customs and Border Protection, and referred the matter to that agency to investigate for possible customs fraud enforcement action. IA also probed the matter directly with the Vietnamese companies during the first administrative review of the antidumping duty order it conducted in the summer of 2005.

During IA's on-site verification process, it discovered correspondence and e-mails related to mislabeling. One respondent—CATACO, of Can Tho Province, Vietnam—prematurely withdrew from the verification process. As a result, IA took additional steps to guarantee that formerly misclassified entries were included in its analysis, thereby ensuring that all duties would be properly assessed.

Circumvention Actions Investigated

Another method used by foreign producers to avoid payment of antidumping duties, while still properly identifying their product, is to process the product in a third country prior to sending it to the United States. This practice, called circumvention, is subject to an anti-circumvention provision in U.S. law, which allows IA to evaluate such arrangements and include them within the scope of its original antidumping order.

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At the same time that IA was conducting its administrative review in 2005 that uncovered CATACO's mislabeling, it was also examining a potential circumvention arrangement involving the processing of Vietnamese fish in Cambodia. In July 2006, IA published its final determination that a Cambodian group, Lian Heng, was circumventing the antidumping order. IA ordered that the company's exports containing Vietnamese fish covered by the 2003 order be subject to antidumping duties.

Cooperation with Prosecutors

In looking after the interests of U.S. producers, IA also worked closely with federal investigators and prosecutors in Pensacola, Florida. In August 2006, several companies were indicted for mislabeling Vietnamese frozen fish as non-subject fish. IA provided prosecutors with important background information on how the antidumping duties were calculated and the history of mislabeling. The com-

panies subsequently pleaded guilty to the charges.

The actions not only resulted in the seizure of millions of kilograms of mislabeled fish and various other company assets, the levy of millions of dollars of fines, and prison time for the defendants, but also sent a strong message that IA takes its antidumping duty enforcement responsibilities very seriously.

Future Actions

IA is continuing to vigorously enforce the antidumping duty order during the administrative review that is currently under way. It also is ready to assist with several other potential criminal indictments regarding mislabeled frozen fish fillets from Vietnam. IA has worked hard to ensure that the relief to the U.S. industry provided by the antidumping order will not be "the one that got away."

Stephen Claeys is the deputy assistant secretary for antidumping and countervailing duty operations in the International Trade Administration's Import Administration.

Americas Competitiveness Forum Update

Progress continues in organizing this June's Americas Competitiveness Forum. Here are details on two areas of focus: innovation and global supply-chain strategies.

BY DAVID WEEMS

Developing the program areas of the Americas Competitive Forum continues. The forum is scheduled for June 11-12, 2007, in Atlanta, Georgia. (See February 2007 issue of *International Trade Update*.) It will bring together government ministers, private-sector leaders, academics, and non-governmental organizations from the Western Hemisphere's democratic countries to explore cutting-edge ideas and to highlight best practices in four key issue areas: (1) sparking and sustaining innovation, (2) creating solutions in education and workforce development, (3) designing successful global supply-chain strategies, and (4) fostering small business development and growth. Here is a look at the details of two of those issue areas.

Sparking and Sustaining Innovation

Innovation is a key factor in creating competitive advantages for competing in the global economy. It is a process for increasing the flow of ideas, systematically capturing and sharing ideas, and leveraging those ideas to increase breakthrough innovation and to accelerate development. Forum participants will have the opportunity to engage in a series of panel discussions that explore best practices and case studies on various topics to learn how innovation can strengthen national and regional competitiveness.

Five panels will be featured under the innovation track of the forum: "Trends in Alternative Energy Technologies," "Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Development," "Bringing Ideas to the Marketplace," "Supporting National and Regional Innovation for Economic Prosperity," and "Partnerships Advancing Economic Growth and Living Conditions."

Designing Successful Global Supply-Chain Strategies

The global supply-chain strategies track will explore how supply-chain efficiency has become a key factor in creating a competitive advantage in the global economy. For companies to create a competitive advantage in the global economy, they must recognize that it is not only their products competing against one another in the marketplace, but also their supply-chain networks.

Three panels will be featured in this track: "The Unobstructed Supply Chain," "Facilitating Trade Movements across Borders," and "Merging Public and Private Efforts for Supply-Chain Capacity Building"

More information about the panels and a detailed agenda of the entire two-day forum are available on the Americas Competitiveness Forum's Web site at <http://trade.gov/competitiveness/acf>.

David Weems is an international trade specialist with the International Trade Administration's Market Access and Compliance unit.



Atlanta, Georgia, skyline. The city will be hosting the Americas Competitiveness Forum on June 11 and 12, 2007. (photo courtesy of Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau)

For More Information

Information on the Americas

Competitiveness Forum is avail-

able on the Web at <http://trade.gov/competitiveness/acf>. Registra-

tion can also be made through the

Web site. Information on the forum

agenda, speakers, and panelists

will be updated on a regular basis,

and questions about the forum

can be submitted through the site.

Questions regarding the Americas

Competitiveness Forum can also be

directed to Alysia Wilson of the ITA's

Market Access and Compliance unit,

tel.: (202) 482-5327;

e-mail: alysia.wilson@mail.doc.gov.

U.S.–Iraq Business Dialogue and Iraqi Business Gateways Initiative Launched

On February 19 and 20, 2007, Franklin L. Lavin, under secretary of commerce for international trade, led a Department of Commerce business and policy mission to Erbil, Iraq, where he discussed economic policy and private-sector development with his counterparts in the central and Kurdistan regional governments.

On February 20, Lavin joined three Iraqi ministers—Abd al-Falah al-Sudani, minister of trade; Fawzi al-Hariri, minister of industry and minerals; and Bayan I. Dazaii, minister of construction and housing—in inaugurating the U.S.–Iraq Business Dialogue. The dialogue is a group of 10 business leaders from each country who will advise both governments on economic reform and business development.

During the trip, Lavin asked the Iraqi leadership to consider four economic policy areas in which the United States can play a constructive role: (1) strengthening the management and capability of state-owned enterprises, (2) enhancing the effectiveness of the public distribution system, (3) increasing the capabilities of the banking sector, and (4) developing the housing sector. “By working together and sharing ideas we can help Iraq down [the] path of economic growth and progress,” noted Lavin.

An important part of the two-day visit was the unveiling of the inaugural edition of a rotating series of private-sector showcases, Iraqi Business Gateways. organized by the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service’s staff in Baghdad and Erbil to highlight the Iraqi Kurdistan region as a platform for trade with and investment in Iraq. As part of the showcases, Lavin also visited Erbil’s busy downtown district to view several bustling construction projects. Future editions of the Iraqi Business Gateways program will include site visits, presentations, research, counseling, and business facilitation to other cities in Iraqi Kurdistan. According to Lavin, “Many of the participating companies have long and successful histories of doing business in the region. We want to get American companies to start thinking



In Erbil, Iraq, two managers of the Ankara-based Nursoy Group of Companies give Under Secretary Franklin L. Lavin an overview of the skyline-defining “Naz City” apartment complex. The mid-rises are the first of their kind in Erbil and are the most visible signs of the growing prosperity and hopefulness of this region of Iraq. (U.S. Department of Commerce photo)

about Iraq and expose Iraqi business opportunities outside of the country.”

For more information about opportunities in Iraq, visit the Web site of the Commerce Department’s Iraq Investment and Reconstruction Task Force at www.export.gov/iraq

Cooperative Agreement Signed to Promote Travel and Tourism Industry

Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez announced on January 30, 2007, a \$3.9 million cooperative agreement with the Travel Industry Association (TIA) to promote travel and tourism to the United States. The announcement was made in Washington, D.C., during a meeting of the United States Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, an advisory body to the Department of Commerce. Also under discussion at the meeting were a number of other important topics, including the Gulf Coast Recovery Strategy, the Discover America Partner-

ship, ease-of-travel issues, and next steps for the travel and tourism industry.

The funds from the cooperative agreement will be used to develop a number of multilanguage Web sites designed to encourage leisure travel to the United States. The sites will help international travelers research and plan their trips to the United States. TIA plans to team up with many of its industry partners, such as Yahoo!, state tourism offices, and Fodor's to make the Web sites as user-friendly and informative as possible.

"As the organization that represents the interests of the entire U.S. travel industry, we're uniquely positioned to create world-class Web sites that will provide relevant and meaningful information for travelers from key markets throughout the world," said Roger Dow, president and chief executive officer of TIA. "We are grateful for the confidence shown in our organization by everyone at the Department of Commerce."

Commerce Department officials also commended this effort and expressed hope that the initiative will enhance destination awareness, positive perception, and intent to travel to the United States. "This partnership will be valuable to the U.S. travel and tourism industry, which has experienced remarkable growth in visitation since 2004," said Ana Guevara, deputy assistant secretary for services. "[Last year] was a record-breaking year for the industry. It has shown a full recovery from 9/11 and once again played a critical role in our economic prosperity."

TIA plans to target key markets that consistently generate healthy revenues for the travel and tourism industry. The top five markets are Canada, Germany, Japan, Mexico, and the United Kingdom. Those countries account for roughly 75 percent of inbound travel and make up the largest pool of inbound visitors to the United States.

Easing the entry and exit processes for international visitors is another important priority for the Commerce Department. Gutierrez has committed the department to fostering ongoing dialogue with the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security on this issue.

For more information about the tourism industry and the U.S. Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, visit the

home page of the Office of Travel and Tourism Industries at <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov>.

Agreement with George Mason University Builds a Bridge between Academia and Government

The International Trade Administration's Manufacturing and Services (MAS) unit signed a five-year memorandum of understanding in February 2007 with George Mason University's School of Public Policy. The agreement enlarges and extends a pilot program begun in 2005 that allowed the university and the Commerce Department unit to exchange ideas, expertise, and resources.

George Mason University is located in Fairfax, Virginia, and is a part of that state's higher education system. The School of Public Policy was founded in 1990 and has programs that focus on international trade and commerce and that combine perspectives on business, technology, law, economics, and public policy.

The Commerce Department's pilot program with George Mason began in February 2005 and ended in January 2007. Many noteworthy achievements stemmed from the program, notably a series of white papers that analyzed current international trade and competitiveness issues. The first study in that series was completed in 2006 and resulted in analysis that enhanced MAS's ability to identify best-prospect markets for the U.S. travel and tourism industry. The preparation of this analysis brought an estimated cost savings to the government of \$6,000.

The new five-year partnership agreement is expected to bring additional benefits to both George Mason University and the Commerce Department. The government will be able to access the wealth of expert advice in trade-related matters that George Mason's faculty and graduate students can offer. The students will have a unique opportunity to interact with, and learn from, MAS staff members as they grapple with the diverse policy-related issues that the agency must handle on a day-to-day basis.

Here is a selected list of international trade events of interest, including ITA-sponsored events, as well as a selection of upcoming international trade fairs. The U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service (USFCS) maintains a comprehensive listing of industry shows at www.export.gov

April 3-5

CIPPE 2007
Beijing, China
www.cippe.com.cn

The China International Petroleum and Petrochemical Technology and Equipment Exhibition (CIPPE) is China's premier exhibition for the petroleum and petrochemical industry. In 2006, the show had 20 U.S. petroleum and petrochemical companies in a U.S. pavilion. CIPPE 2007 is expected to have an even larger U.S. presence. For more information, contact Wang Ling of the USFCS; tel.: +86 (10) 8529-6655, ext. 851; e-mail: ling.wang@mail.doc.gov.

April 12

Intellectual Property Rights in China
www.stopfakes.gov

This program is part of a continuing series of Webinars on the protection of intellectual property rights in China. It is sponsored by ITA's China office and will run from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Eastern time. For more information, or to register, send an e-mail to chinaipr@mail.doc.gov.

April 18-20

FIBCA 2007
Lima, Peru
www.fexpe.com

This show will benefit U.S. manufacturers because Peru has just eliminated tariffs on capital goods. Attendees will include businesspeople with decision-making power, professionals, and technicians from a wide range of industrial and commercial areas. For more information, contact William Corfitzen of the USFCS; tel.: (202) 482-0584; e-mail: william.corfitzen@mail.doc.gov.

April 18-25

Clean Energy Technologies Mission
New Delhi and Chennai, India;
Beijing and Nanjing, China
www.export.gov/cleanenergymission

This Commerce Department mission, led by Assistant Secretary David Bohigian, will give participating U.S. companies an opportunity to make or increase sales in those two important markets. For more information, contact Frank Caliva of the International Trade Administration, tel.: (202) 482-8245; e-mail: frank.caliva@mail.doc.gov.

April 19

World Bank Business Seminar: Supplying Goods
Arlington, Virginia
www.export.gov

This seminar is the third in a series on doing business with the World Bank. It will cover opportunities for supplying goods within World Bank projects, including identifying projects and understanding procurement policies. Senior procurement specialists will discuss how to develop an effective bid and other strategies for success. For more information, contact Rebecca Balogh of the USFCS; tel.: (703) 235-0324; e-mail: rebecca.balogh@mail.doc.gov.

April 19

Legal Aspects of Exporting: Contracts and Trade Secrets
Irmo, South Carolina
www.export.gov

This half-day seminar, organized by the South Carolina District Export Council will cover topics such as creating effective agreements with overseas representatives, protecting trade secrets, and creating enforceable non-compete clauses. For more information, or to register, contact Ann Watts of the USFCS, tel.: (803) 732-5211; e-mail: ann.watts@mail.doc.gov.

April 22-28

AUTO Shanghai 2007
Shanghai, China
www.autoshanghai.com.cn

This show will feature a U.S. pavilion, which will offer U.S. exhibitors streamlined booth arrangements, market-entry counseling, and logistics liaison with Chinese organizers. Assistance with setting up one-to-one meetings with prospective Chinese buyers will also be available for a separate fee. For more information, contact Kevin Chambers of the USFCS, tel.: +86 (21) 6279-8221; e-mail: kevin.chambers@mail.doc.gov.

April 23-27

Healthcare Technologies Trade Mission
Santiago, Chile, and São Paulo, Brazil
www.export.gov

This trade mission will include an optional spin-off to Belo Horizonte. It includes prescreened appointments with potential business partners, an interpreter, market briefings, premission counseling, and follow-up assistance. For more information, contact Pompeya Lambrecht of the USFCS; tel.: (602) 277-5223; e-mail: pompeya.lambrecht@mail.doc.gov.

April 30-May 3

Offshore Technology Conference
Houston, Texas.
www.otcnet.org/2007

With more than 2,000 exhibitors, this is the world's largest and most influential event in the offshore and onshore oil and gas upstream industry. A trade delegation organized by the Commercial Service's Abu Dhabi office will be a vehicle for businesses from the United Arab Emirates to meet with U.S. companies. For more information, contact Chandran Vengayil of the USFCS, tel.: +971 (2) 414-2630; e-mail: chandran.vengayil@mail.doc.gov.

On The Horizon

May 7–10

Rebuild Iraq 2007

Amman, Jordan

www.buyusa.gov/iraq/en/rebuildiraq2007.html

In 2006, this event attracted more than 1,000 exhibitors from 48 countries and more than 13,000 trade visitors, including 4,000 Iraqis. About 71 percent of the exhibitors made sales during the show. The leading industry sectors that will be at the show include building and construction, electricity, water resources, oil and gas, health care, and information and communications technology. For more information, contact Frank Carrico of the USFCS, tel.: (240) 553-0584; e-mail: frank.carrico@mail.doc.gov, or Giles Hazel of Kallman International, tel.: (201) 251-2600, ext. 119; e-mail: gilesh@kallman.com.

May 15–16

Trade Winds Forum

Arlington, Virginia

www.buyusa.gov/southcarolina/tradewinds.html

This Commerce Department event will feature 35 senior commercial officers from U.S. embassies across Africa, Europe, and India as well as private-sector experts to deliver the most up-to-date information on developing opportunities for U.S. businesses. Participants will be able to customize their conference experience by selecting from more than 25 panel sessions. Private consultations will be available upon request. For more information, contact Bill Burwell of the USFCS, tel.: (410) 962-4539; e-mail: bill.burwell@mail.doc.gov.

June 4–12

Building for the Future: 2007

U.S. Green Building Products

Trade Mission to Asia

Hong Kong; Manila, Philippines; Singapore

www.export.gov

Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Singapore all offer good opportunities for U.S. building products suppliers whose products are well respected, particularly for environmentally friendly building projects. Trade mission participants will be introduced to potential agents and distributors, architects, and end-users, and they will have an opportunity to learn more about building trends in those three markets. For more information contact Amy Magat of the USFCS, tel.: (213) 894-3966; e-mail: amy.magat@mail.doc.gov.

Market of the Month:

Saudi Arabia



Saudi Arabia (right), the Red Sea (center foreground) and the Sinai peninsula (left) in a satellite image. (NASA Johnson Space Center—Earth Sciences and Image Analysis)

The economy of Saudi Arabia is growing rapidly and is the largest free-market economy in its region. Its nominal gross domestic product (GDP) in 2006 of \$346.6 billion accounted for more than two-fifths of the GDP of member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council. With a population of 23 million, per capita GDP was about \$15,000, a 15 percent increase from 2005.

The Saudi government has announced large infrastructure projects entailing total investments of \$283 billion during the next three years. Those projects will offer tremendous opportunities for U.S. companies.

Saudi Arabia remains the largest trading partner for the United States in the Africa–Near East–South Asia region and the 16th largest worldwide. The United States tops other country investors in Saudi Arabia. Total bilateral trade between the United States and Saudi Arabia in 2006 was estimated at \$38.4 billion.

Best prospects for U.S. sales in Saudi Arabia include oil and gas, petrochemical, power generation, security, telecommunications and information technology, medical equipment, architectural and engineering services, mining services, and water resources and equipment.

For more information on opportunities in Saudi Arabia, visit www.export.gov or visit the Commercial Service's Saudi Arabia site at www.buyusa.gov/saudiarabia/en.



INTERNATIONAL
TRADE
ADMINISTRATION

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