

Friday, September 9 at the Trans-Pacific Partnership Negotiations in Chicago, IL

This afternoon, United States Trade Representative Ron Kirk is visiting Chicago to attend a reception with delegates and stakeholders at the eighth round of negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Ambassador Kirk and Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel will make very brief welcoming remarks to reception attendees; USTR will release Ambassador Kirk's short remarks as prepared.

Negotiators from the nine TPP partner countries – Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam, and the United States – are reporting good progress early in the eighth round of talks, expected to last through September 15. Negotiating groups that have already begun meetings include services, financial services, investment, customs, telecommunications, intellectual property rights (IPR), government procurement, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, and environment. Numerous negotiating teams are also holding bilateral meetings.

On Saturday, September 10, USTR will provide venues for nearly 60 stakeholder groups to make individual presentations directly to TPP delegates on issues of interest and concern. As at every U.S.-hosted TPP round, USTR invited stakeholders representing business, labor, academic groups and the public to be on-site at the TPP talks in Chicago to interact with negotiators and delegates from TPP partner countries. More than 250 are registered to attend.

In the Trans-Pacific Partnership, President Obama has directed U.S. negotiators to seek a 21st-century agreement that tackles old trade concerns in new ways, that deals with cross-cutting issues previously unaddressed in trade agreements, and that benefits from an unprecedented level of stakeholder input.

In 2009, the East-West Center estimated that Asia already accounted for 27 percent of total U.S. jobs from exports. International Monetary Fund forecasts that the Asia-Pacific economies will grow faster than the world average through at least 2014. Expanding U.S. exports to the Asia-Pacific region can contribute significantly to further job growth and economic recovery for America's working families.