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Joint Statement from the US and Uruguay Regarding the Fifth Joint Commission on Trade and Investment

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Washington, D.C.
April 3-4, 2006

Representatives of the Government of the United States of America and of the Government of Uruguay met in Washington, D.C. on April 3-4, 2006, to prioritize a Work Program for 2006 of the Joint Commission on Trade and Investment ("Commission").

Assistant United States Trade Representative Everett Eissenstat headed the U.S. delegation, while Minister of Industry, Energy and Mining, Jorge Lepra, headed the Uruguayan delegation.

Discussions during the meetings focused on key areas such as the telecommunications sector, electronic commerce, agriculture and sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures, the Generalized System of Preferences, textiles, and intellectual property.

Both governments agreed to consult with the private sector to explore establishing a public-private sector partnership, with the aim of promoting information and communication technologies in Uruguay. The United States and Uruguay also agreed to continue their bilateral discussions on intellectual property right issues through the upcoming year. On textiles, the two governments agreed to encourage our respective textile industries to meet in the near term to discuss bilateral market opportunities and acknowledged that the Doha Development Agenda is the current forum for textile tariff negotiations.

In the area of agriculture, the governments agreed to share updated information on SPS priorities. Following the exchange of such information, the parties plan to convene a meeting of the Consultative Committee on Agriculture in the near term. Both parties agreed to a meeting between Uruguayan agriculture officials and representatives of the Dairy Group in the Imports and Policy Program Division of the Foreign Agricultural Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to discuss quota administration issues. The United States and Uruguay concurred that the Doha Development Agenda is the best multilateral vehicle to discuss global reduction in agricultural tariffs and expand quotas.

Established in 2002, the Commission has evolved into an effective mechanism for the two countries to work to enhance and broaden their trade relationship and to coordinate in areas of mutual interest, such as in the successful negotiation of the U.S.-Uruguay Bilateral Investment Treaty. The governments of the United States and Uruguay agreed to convene another meeting of the Commission before the end of the year.

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