

PRESS RELEASE:
ANNOUNCING THE US-TAIWAN BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT COALITION

(Arlington, Virginia and Taipei, Taiwan – September 15, 2020)

The US-Taiwan Bilateral Trade Agreement Coalition launched on September 15, 2020. The Coalition will provide a mechanism for businesses and organizations across a wide range of sectors to express their support for negotiating and signing a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) between the United States and Taiwan.

The Coalition engages with key stakeholders in the business and policy communities to raise awareness about the benefits of a U.S.-Taiwan BTA. Components of that engagement include events such as workshops, round-table meetings, and lectures. They also include articles and editorials, along with strategy papers to help guide the discussion on priority sectors and priority issues. By solidifying support for a U.S.-Taiwan BTA, the Coalition will act as a primary engine for advocacy promoting BTA negotiations.

Founding members of the Coalition consist of the American Chamber of Commerce in Taipei and the US-Taiwan Business Council. Both organizations have long supported the bilateral trade relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan, and work with their member companies to expand and develop the already substantial business and commercial ties between the two.

AmCham Taipei and the USTBC also understand that a stable and economically vibrant Taiwan is in the best interests of the U.S. and its regional allies. Concluding a U.S.-Taiwan BTA would allow the two partners to continue to enhance the relationship based on mutual trust and shared values and take full advantage of the complementarity of their industries.

Leo Seewald, President of AmCham Taipei, remarked: *“Following the Taiwan government’s announcement this August that it would lift restrictions on imports of American beef and pork products, and considering the strengthening of U.S.-Taiwan ties in recent years, now is an opportune time to take tangible steps toward completing a U.S.-Taiwan BTA. We hope that the Coalition and our role in it can provide the momentum necessary to get this process started.”*

Rupert Hammond-Chambers, President of the US-Taiwan Business Council, added: *“President Tsai’s announcement opens the door to a market liberalization trade agreement with Taiwan. USTR believes that Taiwan made a commitment to trade liberalization, but that for many years the commitment remained unfulfilled. That is now no longer the case. The U.S. business community believes that the removal of this barrier affords both parties a way to move forward on a bilateral trade agreement.”*

Hammond-Chambers also said: *“Linking Taiwan trade liberalization to the U.S.-China trade relationship is a false choice. The United States can pursue its commercial interests with China while it is also consummating an important and ambitious trade agreement with Taiwan. To place a hold on progress with Taiwan, a top ten trading market, over Chinese concerns is self-censorship and contrary to American interests.”*

About AmCham Taipei

Founded in 1951, AmCham Taipei (amcham.com.tw) works to improve Taiwan's business environment, making it more open, innovative and prosperous. With nearly 1,000 members from more than 500 international companies, the non-profit, independent organization serves as a vital bridge between the U.S. and Taiwan. Its *Taiwan White Paper* with suggestions for further improving the business climate in Taiwan has been published annually the past 24 years.

About the US-Taiwan Business Council

The US-Taiwan Business Council (www.us-taiwan.org) is a membership-based non-profit association, founded in 1976 to foster trade and business relations between the United States and Taiwan. The Council provides its members with business intelligence, offers access to an extensive network of relationships, and serves as a vital and effective representative in dealing with business, trade, and investment matters.

About the US-Taiwan Bilateral Trade Agreement Coalition

The US-Taiwan BTA Coalition (www.ustaiwanbta.com) intends to solidify support for a BTA between the U.S. and Taiwan, and to act as a primary engine for advocacy towards that goal. The Coalition serves as a mechanism for binding together all those who support a BTA, leveraging and coordinating resources to construct a broad base of support in all regions of the United States and Taiwan, and from all sectors of the economy.