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Statement from U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk and Japan Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Toshihiro Nikai

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Ambassador Ron Kirk, United States Trade Representative, and Mr. Toshihiro Nikai, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan, met in Washington D.C. on May 4, 2009, to discuss various bilateral and multilateral trade-related issues.

Noting that the global trading system is currently being tested, they agreed that all countries should remain vigilant about their responses to the financial and economic crisis. They reaffirmed that protectionism must be avoided.

They agreed to work together closely to achieve a successful Doha Development Round that is both ambitious and balanced.

They agreed that Japan and the United States, as the host economies of APEC 2010 and 2011, will work closely together to push forward an ambitious agenda for APEC that will help promote economic recovery by fighting protectionism and promoting sustainable growth, and will serve to strengthen regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific.

They reaffirmed their joint view, shared by other interested countries, on the need for China to withdraw the implementation of its certification rules for government procurement of 13 IT security products - rules which are inconsistent with international norms.

They also reaffirmed the importance of the U.S.-Japan bilateral trade and economic relationship, and committed to work together closely to address bilateral issues as well as cooperate on regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest and concern. Furthermore, Ambassador Kirk expressed his gratitude to Minister Nikai for Japan refraining from prohibiting imports of pork as well as for public outreach taken by Japan regarding the safety of pork in the wake of the current influenza outbreak.

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