

October 20, 2011

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Representing the technology industry, which has paved the way for U.S. innovation and growth, as well as the broader business community, we are writing you to underscore the enormous importance we attach to Russia joining the Information Technology Agreement (ITA) as part of its World Trade Organization (WTO) accession package.

Now comprised of 73 WTO members, the ITA has been a key priority of successive U.S. administrations for all major new WTO entrants since it was concluded in 1996. Countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, Ukraine and many others all committed to joining the ITA upon WTO accession.

We believe it is crucial for Russia to maintain its 2006 commitment to join the ITA as part of its accession package. While we are confident the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative is fully engaged in attempting to bring about this outcome, we believe it is important to directly communicate to you how essential it is to our industry that Russia become an ITA signatory and to underscore with you that the U.S. technology industry's support of Russia's accession to the WTO is predicated in large part upon it joining the ITA.

If Russia were not to become an ITA member upon WTO accession, the ramifications would be highly adverse, with the expected loss of important commercial opportunities for U.S. firms selling into the expanding Russian market. More broadly, such a result would undermine the Administration's important trade export and enforcement goals and set a highly negative precedent for future WTO accessions.

Russia's entry into the WTO should be on commercially meaningful and high-standard terms that will benefit U.S. firms and their workers. Therefore, we urge you and your Administration to ensure Russia follows through with its commitment to the United States to join the ITA as part of its WTO accession and that the commitment is binding and enforceable.

Respectfully,

Business Software Alliance (BSA)
Computer and Communications Industry Association (CCIA)
Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)
Consumer Electronics Association (CEA)
Emergency Committee for American Trade (ECAT)
European-American Business Council (EABC)
Information Technology Industry Council (ITI)

National Association of Manufacturers (NAM)
National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA)
National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC)
Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA)
Semiconductor Equipment & Materials International (SEMI)
Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA)
TechAmerica
TechNet
Technology CEO Council
Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA)
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
United States Council for International Business (USCIB)

cc: Mr. William Daley, Chief of Staff