

**The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States (TECRO) Joint Statement on the Conclusion of the Digital Economy Forum**

**December 2, 2015**

Senior representatives from the United States and Taiwan *authorities*, under the auspices of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office *in the United States* (TECRO), held the Digital Economy Forum in Taipei on December 2, 2015, recognizing the importance of the Internet to promoting future sustainable and inclusive global economic growth, and reinforcing the strong and mutually beneficial ties between the two economies in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) innovation and commercialization.

In this dialogue, the two sides held open discussions with each other and private sector representatives on important shared ICT priorities, such as: creating legal and regulatory frameworks to support digital development; enabling digital trade and cross-border digital payment systems; enhancing cooperation to expand Asia Pacific regional and global ICT connectivity; strengthening and diversifying global high-technology supply chains; preserving and protecting data privacy; and ensuring online intellectual property rights protection.

The *representatives* exchanged views on other issues of mutual concern including developments in international fora such as the Internet Governance Forum, the World Radiocommunications Conference, and the World Summit on the Information Society Ten-Year Review. The two sides endorsed the importance of the multistakeholder model of Internet governance to maintaining an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable Internet. The two sides also explored opportunities for further cooperation in expanding Internet connectivity around the world and bridging the “digital divide” through initiatives such as the U.S.-led Global Connect program, in longstanding and close cooperation in regional fora such as APEC, as well as *in new mechanisms* such as the Global Cooperation and Training Framework.

The *representatives* expressed strong support for digital trade and investment policies that promote innovation and global commerce, including policies that

facilitate the free flow of information across borders, prevent data localization barriers and forced technology transfers, and encourage adoption and deployment of the best available technologies. The two sides noted the importance of the *AIT-TECRO Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA)* in discussing and resolving bilateral trade issues, and *commit to continue promoting trade related principles for the ICT services sector developed under the TIFA* and enshrined in the 2013 AIT-TECRO Joint Statement on Trade Principles for ICT Services. *The representatives expressed support for the inclusion of binding rules to liberalize digital trade in the proposed Trade in Services Agreement as a means to achieve these goals. The representatives also noted the importance of cooperation in the World Trade Organization to eliminate tariffs through the expansion of the Information Technology Agreement and expand global trade in ICT goods.*

*The TECRO delegation* was led by Minister Woody Duh from the National Development Council, and included participation by Minister without Portfolio Jaclyn Tsai and representatives from the Executive Yuan, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, National Communications Commission, Financial Supervisory Commission, and Central Bank.

*The AIT delegation* was led by Dr. Vaughan Turekian, Science and Technology Advisor to the Secretary of State, with participation by officials representing the Department of State, Department of Commerce, and the Federal Communications Commission.