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Trade Briefs

U.S. Looking to Address Trade in Services Through APEC

The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk is now engaged in promoting the negotiation of a new trade agreement for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. The trade agreement would focus on guiding principles for the trade in services among the group of 21 nations in APEC.

The U.S. is trending toward a services-focused economy, and therefore the future gains that are available to the U.S. in negotiating a major services trade agreement are substantial.

The stalled World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha round of international trade talks has not been focused on services. Instead, Doha has dealt mostly with agricultural and non-agricultural market access. Therefore, Doha is not necessarily seen as the best vehicle for delivering trade liberalization in the service sector.

The USTR is clearly seeking new services initiatives in the Doha round. It has been reported that the USTR is considering new strategies for attracting developing countries to support services initiatives within the Doha framework. These initiatives include information technology services and "green" services (environmental and energy services).

However, free trade advocates are skeptical that the stalled Doha round will result in near term liberalization, as it is a complicated and difficult negotiation that hinges on the decisions of dozens of countries and product areas. Focusing on APEC and on trade in services may allow the U.S. to make faster progress and to put pressure on the Doha process. An services agreement with APEC could fill in gaps that are left by Doha and create new market opportunities in the short term. Negotiations with APEC would not displace the Doha round. Rather, they would go on at the same time.

The APEC agreement would create non-binding "principles" that would address difficult service areas such as disparate national treatment, regulatory reforms, greater transparency, and non-discrimination.

There is an APEC summit in November, and some expect the U.S. to unveil an agreement on these principles at that event.

Dumping Watch

Initiation of AD, CVD Investigations into Seamless Carbon and Alloy Steel Standard, Line, and Pressure Pipe from China

On October 14 and 15, the Department of Commerce (DOC) gave notice that it was initiating antidumping (AD) duty investigation into the imports of certain seamless carbon and alloy steel standard, line, and pressure pipe from China.

On September 16, the DOC received AD and CVD petitions from United States Steel Corporation and V&M Star L.P. concerning imports of this type of steel pipe from China. Since then, TMK IPSCO and the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union also entered as petitioners. The petitioners allege that sales of the subject merchandise was made at less than fair value and that producers and exporters of the subject merchandise received countervailable subsidies and that imports materially injure and threaten future material injury to an industry in the U.S. The DOC determined that the petitioners filed the petitions on behalf of the domestic industry because they are interested parties, and they have demonstrated significant industry support with respect these investigations.

In the CVD petition, the petitioners contend that the industry is injured due to evidence of reduced market share, increased import penetration, underselling and price depressing, lost sales and revenue, reduced production, reduced shipments, increased inventory overhand, and an overall decline in financial performance. The DOC will investigate the following programs alleged to have provided countervailable subsidies: preferential loans, equity programs, tax benefit programs, subsidies for foreign invested enterprises, tariff and indirect tax programs, government provision of goods and services for less than adequate remuneration, grant programs, and other regional programs.

The DOC has notified the International Trade Commission (ITC) of this initiation, and the ITC will preliminarily determine whether there is a reasonable indication that imports of the subject merchandise materially injures or threatens to injure a U.S. industry.

Federal Register Notices

International Trade Administration

[A-475-826] Certain Cut-to-Length Carbon-Quality Steel Plate Products From Italy: Extension of Time Limit for Preliminary Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review 74 FR 53215-53216, October 16, 2009.

[Application No. 88-11A16] Export Trade Certificate of Review 74 FR 53215-53216, October 16, 2009.

[C-570-957] Certain Seamless Carbon and Alloy Steel Standard, Line, and Pressure Pipe from the People's Republic of China: Initiation of Countervailing Duty Investigation 74 FR 52945-52948, October 15, 2009.

[A-570-601] Tapered Roller Bearings and Parts Thereof, Finished and Unfinished, from the People's Republic of China; Extension of Time Limit for the Final Results of the 2007-

2008 Administrative Review of the Antidumping Duty Order 74 FR 52948-52949, October 15, 2009.

[A-421-811] Purified Carboxymethylcellulose from the Netherlands: Final Results of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review 74 FR 52742-52744, October 14, 2009.

[A-570-956] Certain Seamless Carbon and Alloy Steel Standard, Line, and Pressure Pipe From the People's Republic of China: Initiation of Antidumping Duty Investigation 74 FR 52744-52749, October 14, 2009.

[A-423-808] Stainless Steel Plate in Coils from Belgium: Notice of Rescission of Antidumping Duty Administrative Review 74 FR 52750-52751, October 14, 2009.

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Certified Trade Mission Program Application 74 FR 52451, October 13, 2009.

[A-570-898] Chlorinated Isocyanurates From the People's Republic of China: Notice of Extension of Time Limit for Final Results of Semi-Annual New Shipper Review 74 FR 52451-52452, October 13, 2009.

[A-570-898] Chlorinated Isocyanurates from the People's Republic of China: Notice of Extension of Time Limit for the Final Results of the Antidumping Duty Administrative Review 74 FR 52452, October 13, 2009.

[A-549-822] Certain Frozen Warmwater Shrimp From Thailand: Final Results of Antidumping Duty Changed Circumstances Review and Notice of Revocation in Part 74 FR 52452-52454, October 13, 2009.

International Trade Commission

[Investigation No. 337-TA-641] In the Matter of Certain Variable Speed Wind Turbines and Components Thereof; Notice of Commission Determination To Review a Final Initial Determination of the Administrative Law Judge 74 FR 52975-52976, October 15, 2009.

[USITC SE-09-027] Government in the Sunshine Act Meeting Notice 74 FR 52976-52977, October 15, 2009.

[Investigation No. 332-505] Use of the "First Sale Rule" for Customs Valuation of U.S. Imports 74 FR 52977, October 15, 2009.

The Week Ahead

- On October 19, the ITC held a commission vote on the final phase countervailing duty investigation into Ni-Resist piston inserts from Argentina.
- On October 20, the ITC will hold a hearing on the final phase antidumping and countervailing duty investigations into commodity matchbooks from India.