

**Opening Statement of Trade Subcommittee Chairman Devin Nunes,
Committee on Ways & Means**

Hearing on U.S.-EU Trade and Investment Partnership Negotiations

May 16, 2013

Good afternoon. I want to welcome everyone to our hearing on the U.S.-EU trade and investment partnership negotiations. Today's hearing focuses on the enormous potential that exists in a U.S.-EU trade and investment agreement. The U.S.-EU economic relationship is the largest and most integrated in the world, comprising 50 percent of global GDP and supporting millions of U.S. jobs.

Although it's a deep and mature relationship, we can do more. The timing is exactly right to promote growth in both of our economies, and I strongly support negotiations for an ambitious and comprehensive trade and investment agreement.

From a strategic perspective, the United States and Europe have long been close allies in the effort to open markets and promote free trade. These negotiations are an opportunity to strengthen an already strong economic alliance and serve as an influential model to promote free trade and open markets around the world.

However, we should also recognize that these negotiations will not be easy. They will require enormous creativity and flexibility on both sides of the Atlantic.

Any agreement must be ambitious and comprehensive, with all issues on the table. A critical area for me is agriculture and SPS. This area has been exceedingly longstanding, difficult, and frustrating, which must be resolved. In particular, I would like to see sufficiently enforceable obligations that go beyond the WTO SPS chapter. I know many of my colleagues share this concern.

This hearing provides an opportunity to hear from the private sector about the potential benefits and challenges of these negotiations. In particular, I hope that we will learn more from our witnesses about the following issues:

1. Addressing traditional barriers to trade, including eliminating tariffs and liberalizing tariff rate quotas.
2. Resolving services and investment barriers and establishing strong rules in these areas that can be jointly promoted in our engagement with other countries.

3. Creating specific commitments and an ongoing agenda to identify and eliminate unnecessary regulatory barriers, including sanitary and phytosanitary barriers to U.S. agriculture exports. The EU regulatory process is often non-transparent, prevents U.S. stakeholders from participating, and is unpredictable. An agreement should address the EU's practices on a comprehensive, horizontal basis.
4. Exploring opportunities for regulatory cooperation and coherence by eliminating redundancy and inefficiency without weakening our respective high standards.
5. Developing and strengthening cooperation regarding our shared concerns with trade and investment policies in third countries, such as anticompetitive behavior from subsidized state-owned enterprises and policies that undermine intellectual property rights.

Today's hearing also highlights the need to develop and pass bipartisan Trade Promotion Authority to provide a clear framework for Congressional consideration and implementation of trade agreements as well as to set out negotiating objectives for this negotiation. I welcome the Administration's interest in TPA but call for further and intensified engagement from USTR and the White House.

I will now yield to Ranking Member Rangel for the purpose of an opening statement.