

# USTR Negotiators Report Successful First Round Of Trans-Pacific Partnership Talks

**Melbourne, Australia** - U.S. negotiators have finished their fifth and final day of Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations with their counterparts from Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam. During the week of talks in Melbourne, U.S. negotiators exchanged views with their counterparts on how best to develop the framework for a high-quality, broad-based 21st century free trade agreement that will give American businesses and workers access to the world's most dynamic and growing markets, supporting well-paying jobs here in the United States.

**"USTR negotiators report that today's meetings in Australia capped off an extremely productive first round, which has set the negotiations off to a strong start. TPP members have exchanged views openly and started thinking creatively about how best to ensure a high-standard, regional agreement,"** said Ambassador Ron Kirk. **"Based on this, U.S. negotiators will now seek further input from Congress and U.S. stakeholders on negotiating objectives and approaches to key issues as we prepare for the second round of TPP negotiations in June."**

This week, negotiators considered possible approaches to further open markets between TPP members, expand trade and support good jobs. They also had robust discussions on how to design the agreement so that it promotes regional integration, regulatory coherence, competitiveness, transparency and development, as well as ways to encourage the participation of small- and medium-sized businesses in trade and advance other key issues, such as labor and the environment.

U.S. negotiators and their TPP counterparts agreed on detailed work plans in each negotiating group in order to lay the groundwork for a productive second round. Ahead of the next round, they will draft papers on a variety of issues, including papers on specific issues that emerged during this week's discussions, new areas that the TPP members may be able to incorporate in the agreement, and how methods of incorporating issues that cut across the agreement. They also agreed to exchange a wide range of information, including on their respective legal and regulatory systems as well as other matters.

The United States and its TPP partners discussed the goal of expanding the agreement to countries throughout the Asia Pacific. They will brief APEC members on the initiative at the APEC ministerial meeting in June.