



**Peter M. Robinson**  
President & CEO

January 21, 2009

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the United States Council for International Business (USCIB), I send our congratulations on your election and inauguration as the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.

USCIB has a longstanding record of providing the U.S. government with constructive and considered business views on international trade and investment issues critical to the U.S. economy. We look forward to working with you and senior members of your administration on a wide array of such issues, and in coming days, will be contacting a number of Cabinet officials. Today, I write to support your leadership in managing the most critical and overarching of the challenges we face: the global financial crisis and recession.

USCIB promotes international engagement and regulatory prudence in support of open markets, competitiveness and innovation, sustainable development and corporate responsibility. Our members include top U.S.-based global companies and professional services firms from every sector of our economy, with operations in every region of the world. With a unique global network encompassing leading international business organizations, USCIB provides business views to policy makers and regulatory authorities worldwide and works to facilitate international trade.

USCIB applauds the actions taken by the U.S. and other governments to restore confidence in financial markets. It is clear, however, that additional steps will be necessary to mitigate the impact of the global recession. Much work lies ahead, and that will require the full participation of governments, institutional investors, capital users, and ordinary citizens everywhere. U.S. leadership will be indispensable because of the size of the U.S. economy and its role as the epicenter of the financial collapse.

The goal of concerted action must be to get capital flowing once again. Businesses large and small are starved of the capital they need for everyday operations, not least for financing trade. Meanwhile investment spending is grinding to a halt. Governments must find ways to ensure that the liquidity that they have collectively pumped into the system finds its intended targets.

Clearly, the complexity of financial instruments, coupled with a lack of transparency in certain financial sectors, has compounded the regulatory task. Although new regulation is needed, it must be targeted, prudent, and sensible. Freezing asset flows with overregulation can do as much damage to the world economy as a weak regulatory framework.

The U.S. should work in the G-20 and other forums on convergence to a single set of high-quality global financial reporting standards set through an independent, thorough due process giving voice to all stakeholders yet free of political pressures.

Along side efforts to strengthen capital markets, improve transparency and promote sensible capital markets, the U.S. must work together with other governments to keep markets open to international trade and investment. Some countries are already resorting to border measures to protect their domestic economies. Such policies failed during the Great Depression and are not likely to be anymore effective today. Open markets allow the flow of goods, services, and capital that enable the private sector to continue to generate economic growth, employment and wages that reflect productivity. Reversing the decline in global trade is a key element in bolstering economic growth worldwide.

In that regard, USCIB believes that continued U.S. support for trade liberalization and a conclusion of the Doha Development Round remain important objectives. Trade is a major economic stimulus to the U.S. economy and a generator of high-paying jobs. It has been a major factor in the rise of millions from poverty around the world until the recent financial collapse. Investment is another key to the revival of the U.S. and world economies. Foreign investment contributes enormously to the wealth and prosperity enjoyed by most of the world's population. However, in the current market environment, calls by some countries to restrict investment flows or to channel them to certain sectors must be resisted. USCIB regards as especially pernicious the notion of using national security reviews of inward investment as a form of industrial policy, in which governments, not markets, pick the winners and losers and discriminate against foreign investment.

Difficult challenges lie ahead for governments, business and for citizens. We urge your administration to continue U.S. leadership in word and deed on international economic policy; it is vital in this time of crisis.

As noted above, USCIB will also be submitting views to your Cabinet members on a variety of specific and related issues, including international labor standards and climate change policies that are supported by, and reinforcing of, open markets.

We look forward to working with your administration to restore U.S. economic growth and the prosperity of the global economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter M. Robinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "P".

Peter M. Robinson