



BUSINESS FORUM TTIP – ROMA, CONFINDUSTRIA, 11 LUGLIO
Traccia per l'intervento della Presidente Avv. Licia Mattioli

Dear Vice Minister, Ambassadors, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to Rome and to Confindustria for this business forum. I am particularly happy to host this event for two reasons:

As an entrepreneur, I am convinced that an open and integrated transatlantic market is the most sustainable basis to generate growth and employment, ensure fair competition, share advanced systems and technologies and provide the global market with efficient standards.

Moreover,

I have been recently nominated President of the Committee for International Relations of Confindustria. Today's event is the first I chair in such capacity and it concerns the biggest and most challenging chapter of the history of the European trade policy ever: indeed, I couldn't ask for a more exciting beginning.

But our commitment in this topic roots back much longer.

Since the earliest phases of the process that brought to the TTIP negotiations, Confindustria has played a central role in collecting inputs, formulating suggestions, providing analysis, raising awareness.

At all stages, our action was implemented in close cooperation with our partners. So let me warmly thank Businesseurope and our American sister organizations for their valuable support and for the qualified presence that is here today to convey our common message.

Indeed, transatlantic business speaks one voice in calling for an open and accessible transatlantic market.

We need it to freely trade and invest and so improve our processes, reduce costs, create jobs, innovate and better compete worldwide.

Our support to TTIP is out of doubt.

Precisely two years ago - on the 12th of July 2012 - in this same room, the same partners met with the European Commission and the US administration for an important workshop in the framework of the *Transatlantic Economic Council – TEC* – centered upon small and medium enterprises.

At that time, starting negotiations was little more than a wish since no concrete deliverable was foreseeable yet.

Still, we knew it was possible and we encouraged the two parties to go further on.

Since then, the process moved ahead quickly, thanks to the strong political will but also – we are proud to say – thanks to business.

However, despite our support, there is some criticism around. But this is unavoidable. All historical processes divide people into long-sighted and skeptics. Business belongs to the first group by default.

We look at innovation as our mainstream. Change is in our DNA. We don't fear it. We are made for it.

The world economy is moving too fast for Europe and the United States to stand and watch Asian economies set the global trade and investment's patterns.

There is so much we can do together, but we need a sound and effective framework to operate in.

This is why we meet today. Our expectations haven't changed: we strive more than ever for an ambitious agreement.

The EU Institutions are undergoing their renewal; the Italian semester has just started; negotiations are entering their core phase: our discussion takes place at the eve of the 6th Round of negotiations that will be held in Brussels next week.

Therefore, the timing is greatly adequate. We have three basic messages:

The first is for the EU and the US administrations: the renewal of the EU Institutions and the mid-term elections in the US could slow down the process: we call on you for this not to happen. Business invests energies and resources: don't let us down.

The second is for the negotiators: from Monday on you will be at work together again. The thematic panels that will follow soon will provide concrete inputs for your work: use them and maximize their value.

The third is for the Italian Presidency of the EU that started two weeks ago: we know how much our government is committed to this agreement and we know how keen Vice Minister Calenda is. I want him to know that we are all with him.

There are critical issues. Some of them are extremely critical and concern Italy more than other European partners, such as the Geographical Indications.

Not all chapters of negotiations will advance on the same path. Powerful lobbies are resisting the deal on both sides of the Atlantic. We are aware of all this. TTIP is complex and controversial, but it can be done !

It is hard to advice negotiators, since their job is so difficult. Our hope is that the typical business attitude to adopt pragmatic solutions can help reduce the terrific complexity of their task.

Let me give just a few examples and forgive me for being little provocateur:

Despite the low level of average protection, tariff peaks hinder market access. The *removal of duties* would deliver immediate results, so: please table courageous offers; be ambitious in their coverage; surprise us: say you will remove duties 100%.

Regulatory convergence is a giant problem. Neither the EU nor the US are ready to change their legislations, therefore both horizontal and sector-specific approaches are needed, so: get together EU and American standard agencies and involve business in their discussion; let us steer conclusions and verify their applicability with them. If all involved actors cooperate, then solutions become more achievable.

Access to public procurements will be ensured only when restrictions will be limited to few strategic sectors and the different levels of state regulations will be harmonized. Don't regret opening: the benefits of competition will be massively rewarding for all of us.

The same applies to *services*: mutually guaranteeing equal treatment with limited exceptions is the way to provide transatlantic producers with the necessary tools to be competitive worldwide.

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

today's global geo-economic chessboard is complex and densely interrelated. We know that policy makers must consider a wide spectrum of factors.

While we talk of *transatlantic* integration, in a different time zone, others talk of *transpacific* integration.

Some see the two major agreements under negotiations, our TTIP and the *Trans Pacific Partnership - TPP* as a dichotomy between nascent and potentially opposed integrated trading blocks.

Others believe these two powerful engines are beneficial to global governance and economic growth, complementary and heading in the same direction.

Business views and approaches are straightforward, sometimes basic, but most of times effective. We rarely see conflicts; we rather tend to see convergence, unless unbalanced regulations disrupt the marketplace.

So we do in this respect: TPP and TTIP may well live together, but we need predictable timeframes and measurable achievements for TTIP.

Today's distinguished keynotes will highlight unreleased aspects of the process and will stimulate our reflections. Hopefully also in this regard.

Soon after we will have three thematic panels discussing issues whose relevance in the negotiations framework is very high: "*regulatory convergence*"; "*market access for SMEs*" and "*public procurements*".

We will hear about successful stories and problems, technical aspects and strategic reasoning, small and large business.

All this for the sake of the best results possible in the TTIP adventure.

I thank you very much for your attention and I wish you a fruitful working session.