

pertaining to telecommunication and information issues.

The ITAC will meet to discuss the matters related to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which will take place in December 2003, including U.S. preparations for the WSIS. The meeting will take place on September 10, 2003 from 10:30 am to 12 pm at the Historic National Academy of Science Building. The National Academy of Sciences is located at 2100 C St. NW., Washington, DC.

Members of the public are welcome to participate and may join in the discussions, subject to the discretion of the Chair. Persons planning to attend this meeting should send the following data by fax to (202) 647-7407 or email to worsleydm@state.gov not later than 24 hours before the meeting: (1) Name of the meeting, (2) your name, and (3) organizational affiliation. A valid photo ID must be presented to gain entrance to the National Academy of Sciences Building. Directions to the meeting location may be obtained by calling the ITAC Secretariat at (202) 647-2592 or email to worsleydm@state.gov.

Dated: August 11, 2003.

Anne Jillson,

Foreign Affairs Officer, Department of State.

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Trade Policy Staff Committee; Public Comments on the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act and the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act: Report to Congress

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice and request for public comment.

SUMMARY: The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) is seeking the views of interested parties on the operation of the Caribbean Basin Economic Recovery Act (CBERA), as amended by the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act (CBTPA) (19 U.S.C. 2701 *et seq.*). Section 212(f) of the CBERA, as amended, requires the President to submit a report to Congress regarding the operation of the CBERA and CBTPA (together commonly referred to as the Caribbean Basin Initiative, or CBI) on or before December 31, 2001, and every two years thereafter. The TPSC invites written comments concerning the operation of the CBI, including comments on the performance of each

CBERA and CBTPA beneficiary country, as the case may be, under the criteria described in sections 212(b), 212(c), and 213(b)(5)(B) of the CBERA, as amended.

ADDRESSES: Submit comments by electronic mail (e-mail) to FR0086@ustr.gov. If unable to submit comments by e-mail, contact Office of the Americas, Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), 600 17th Street, NW., Room 223, Washington, DC 20508, at (202) 395-6135.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrea Gash Durkin, Director for Central America and the Caribbean, Office of the Americas, Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), 600 17th Street, NW., Room 223, Washington, DC 20508. The telephone number is (202) 395-6135 and the facsimile number is (202) 395-9675.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Interested parties are invited to submit comments on any aspect of the program's operation, including the performance of CBERA and CBTPA beneficiary countries, as the case may be, under the criteria described in sections 212(b), 212(c), and 213(b)(5)(B) of the CBERA, as amended, and provided below. Other issues to be examined in this report include: the CBI's effect on the volume and composition of trade and investment between the United States and the Caribbean Basin beneficiary countries; its effect in advancing U.S. trade policy goals as set forth in the CBTPA.

The following countries are the current beneficiaries of the CBI. All are both CBERA and CBTPA beneficiary countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and British Virgin Islands.

Eligibility Criteria for CBTPA Beneficiary Countries (Section 213(b)(5)(B) of CBERA)

In determining whether to designate a country as a CBTPA beneficiary country, the President must take into account the criteria contained in sections 212(b) and (c) of CBERA, and other appropriate criteria, including the following:

(1) Whether the beneficiary country has demonstrated a commitment to undertake its obligations under the WTO under or ahead of schedule and

participate in negotiations toward the completion of the FTAA or another free trade agreement.

(2) The extent to which the country provides protection of intellectual property rights consistent with or greater than the protection afforded under the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

(3) The extent to which the country provides internationally recognized worker rights including—

(I) The right of association;

(II) The right to organize and bargain collectively;

(III) A prohibition on the use of any form of forced or compulsory labor;

(IV) A minimum age for the employment of children; and

(V) Acceptable conditions of work with respect to minimum wages, hours of work, and occupational safety and health.

(4) Whether the country has implemented its commitments to eliminate the worst forms of child labor.

(5) The extent to which the country has met U.S. counter-narcotics certification criteria under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(6) The extent to which the country has taken steps to become a party to and implement the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption.

(7) The extent to which the country applies transparent, nondiscriminatory and competitive procedures in government procurement, and contributes to efforts in international fora to develop and implement rules on transparency in government procurement.

Public Comment

Comments must be submitted, in English, to the Chairman of the Trade Policy Staff Committee, and must be received no later than October 2, 2003. Submissions in response to this notice will be available for public inspection by appointment with the staff of the USTR Public Reading Room, except for information granted "business confidential" status pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.6. If the submission contains business confidential information, a non-confidential version of the submission must also be submitted that indicates where confidential information was redacted by inserting asterisks where material was deleted. In addition, the confidential submission must be clearly marked "BUSINESS CONFIDENTIAL" in large, bold letters at the top and bottom of each and every page of the document. The public version that does not contain business confidential information must also be clearly marked in large, bold letters at