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Trade Laws and Export Controls

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## Bill to Ban Some FDI in US Agriculture

Sens. Mike Rounds (R-SD) and Jon Tester (D-Mont) introduced legislation that would prevent China, Russia, Iran and North Korea from investing in, purchasing or otherwise acquiring land or businesses involved in agriculture.

The **Promoting Agriculture Safeguards and Security (PASS) Act of 2023** would ban China, Russia, Iran and North Korea from purchasing US farmland and agricultural companies. It also would give **the Secretary of Agriculture a seat on the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States**.

The bill also would require the President to submit a report to Congress on any waiver granted to a prohibited country and require the Agriculture Secretary to report on the risk of foreign purchases of agricultural companies to the US agriculture sector.

Companion legislation was introduced in the House by Reps. Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Jim Costa (D-Calif) and Rick Crawford (R-Ark).

The legislation comes on the heels of a letter from Air Force Assistant Secretary Andrew Hunter to stating that his department found a proposed Chinese corn mill purchase in North Dakota is a national security risk. But the inter-agency Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States said it does not have jurisdiction over agriculture investment.

In a letter released by Sen. John Hoeven (R-ND), the Air Force official wrote that "while CFIUS concluded that it did not have jurisdiction, the Department's view is unambiguous: the proposed project presents a significant threat to national security with both near- and long-term risks of significant impacts."

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## US, Mexico Biotech Corn Talks

The Administration remains hopeful of reaching an agreement with Mexico over its proposed ban of biotech corn, although the possibility of a dispute settlement case under the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement is still on the table, a US agricultural trade official said last week.

Senate Agriculture Committee members grilled new **Agriculture Undersecretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs Alexis Taylor** on the status of discussions with Mexico, warning that the proposed ban would devastate US corn growers and exporters.

Ms. Taylor pointed out that she was part of a US team that went to Mexico City earlier this month to discuss the proposed ban. The engagement with Mexico remains productive. “We are still hoping to resolve this,” she told the committee. But the Administration is “reserving all rights available under the USMCA.” Mexico’s proposed ban on genetically-modified corn and other agricultural products disregards the science-based principles of the USMCA, she said.

Committee members also questioned Ms. Taylor on agricultural market development programs as they begin to think about the 2023 farm bill. The Market Access Program is heavily oversubscribed, Ms. Taylor said. The current budget is \$200 million, but USDA receives \$300 million in requests.

Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) pointed to her legislation to extend and expand the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Cooperator Program. Ms. Taylor indicated she sees a lot of potential for US export growth in countries like India, Vietnam, Kenya and other African countries. **There is a need to diversify away from China, which currently is US farmers’ largest export market.**

## ITA / Amazon Export Push

Commerce’s International Trade Administration (ITA) and Amazon announced a Strategic Partnership to facilitate a collaboration called **GoGlobal with Commerce and Amazon**. The initiative will take advantage of ITA’s assistance and resources to promote sales through Amazon’s marketplace. ITA will provide participating U.S. small businesses with guidance, information, and resources, and Amazon will provide training to U.S. businesses to sell in 21 countries around the globe where Amazon Global Selling is available.

“Through eCommerce, businesses can find a more robust channel than ever for expanding international sales through digital strategies and a globalized web presence,” said **Assistant Secretary for Global Markets Arun Venkataraman**. “ITA’s partnership with Amazon—which will help small businesses across the United States access markets around the world—is an example of how we are delivering on our commitment to advance inclusive economic growth.”

U.S. small business exporters will be able to find global selling opportunities and acquire the tools to begin or expand their exporting journey through interactive content and training webinars. The new [GoGlobal with Commerce and Amazon landing page](#) will serve as a one-stop-shop for resources produced in collaboration between ITA’s Commercial Service and eCommerce Solutions Center and Amazon. It will also serve as a hub for information on other U.S. Government programs and resources, such as acquiring

STEP export vouchers; navigating complex regulatory and customs environments, and coaching on how to leverage deals and promotions to grow business through Amazon global stores.

## WTO Rules, Agriculture Chairs Selected

*Geneva (via Washington Trade Daily)* World Trade Organization members have confirmed the appointments of Einar Gunnarsson of Iceland as new chair of the Negotiating Group on Rules and Alparslan Acarsoy of Turkey as chair of the Committee on Agriculture in Special Session. Ambassador Gunnarsson will chair the second wave of fisheries subsidies negotiations, following the agreement adopted at the WTO's 12th Ministerial Conference. Ambassador Acarsoy will steer the process to build momentum on agriculture negotiations.

Members gave the formal green light to the appointments following the consultation process led by the Chair of the General Council, Ambassador Didier Chambovey of Switzerland, to fill two posts that had been vacant over the past few months.

Speaking to members, Ambassador Gunnarsson noted there is much work to be done in the short time before the 13th Ministerial Conference that will take place in Abu Dhabi in late February 2024, according to a WTO release. The ambassador said he is looking forward to working "both on implementing the agreement we concluded last June and also getting underway in the second wave of negotiations."

**WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala commented that without an NGR Chair work had come to a standstill in a crucially important work stream, on fisheries subsidies, namely the second wave of negotiations.** She also noted the importance of resuming agriculture talks as expeditiously as possible since this critically important issue has been stalled without a Chair since last summer.

Ambassador Acarsoy underlined the tough work ahead members are facing, especially in the current international context. **"MC13 is just a year from now and we are today at a crucial crossroad," he said. "Let us be clear, we were not able to deliver in the agricultural negotiations in the previous two Ministerial Conferences and reaching a successful outcome at MC13 is therefore more critical than ever.** We have no time to waste, and we must immediately engage with the right approach in order to overcome entrenched differences that have stymied progress so far."

## ITC Begins TRIPS Extension Study

The International Trade Commission is launching a new fact-finding investigation as the Administration considers whether to extend flexibilities under the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights to COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics. The investigation was requested by the US Trade Representative's Office, which is involved in WTO negotiations on the extension.

USTR asked the ITC to conduct an investigation and prepare a report that identifies the universe of existing COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics.

Specifically, the report will include an overview of production and distribution, including a description of the supply chain and an overview of demand, including market segmentation of global demand and consumption; information on availability and pricing; and global trade data.

The report also will catalog barriers to more diverse geographical distribution of COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics manufacturing, the relationship between patent protection and innovation and access to medicines, use of and alternatives to compulsory licenses and the effect of the Medicines Patent Pool on access to COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics.

USTR also asked that the report include input from foreign governments, non-governmental health advocates and diagnostic and therapeutic manufacturers on the following:

- how the TRIPS Agreement promotes innovation in and/or limits access to COVID-19 diagnostics and therapeutics;
- successes and challenges in using existing TRIPS flexibilities;
- the extent to which products not yet on the market, or new uses for existing products, could be affected by an extension of the Ministerial Decision to diagnostics and therapeutics;
- whether and how existing TRIPS rules and flexibilities can be deployed to improve access to medicines;
- to what extent further clarifications of existing TRIPS flexibilities would be useful in improving access to medicines;
- the relationship between intellectual property protection and corporate research and development expenditures, taking into account other expenditures, such as share buybacks, dividends and marketing;
- the relevance, if any, of the fact that diagnostic and therapeutic products used with respect to COVID-19 may also have application to other diseases;
- and the location of jobs associated with the manufacturing of diagnostics and therapeutics, including in the United States.

The ITC will hold a public hearing on the investigation on March 29 at 9:30 am at the ITC. It expects to submit a report to USTR on October 17.

## Axelrod Touts Enforcement Collaboration, Expansion

**Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Enforcement Matt Axelrod** spoke to the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Forum on U.S. Export & Re-export Compliance for Canadian Operations Jan 31 in Totonto. *The following has been edited for brevity, for full text [\[here\]](#)*

**“Simply put, export controls are a shared endeavor.** And when it comes to export enforcement, cooperation is critical to ensure our shared security. Countries implementing multilateral export control regimes have long known that such controls are critical to the world’s safety, and most effective when widely implemented across the globe. But our current geopolitical challenges, the increasingly rapid development of technology with the potential to provide asymmetric military advantage, and the countless ways in which the world is now interconnected, have raised the prominence and impact of export controls in unprecedented ways.

**And that means that the importance of export enforcement has risen in unprecedented ways as well.**

It's not sufficient for likeminded countries just to have parallel controls on paper. It's critically important, but it's not sufficient. We also need to ensure a common commitment to effective implementation and enforcement of those controls. In other words, export enforcement must be a shared focus across the globe. Strong multilateral export enforcement coordination is essential to keeping the world safe. All likeminded countries should be looking to build their export enforcement capacity, both individually and collectively.

But given the increase in security risk that advanced technologies – such as quantum computing, hypersonic weapons, and unmanned aerial vehicles – now pose, **we need all likeminded countries to invest in their export enforcement capacity.** Unlike other geopolitical challenges, export enforcement cannot be effective unless there is a coordinated global effort. Without such an effort, bad actors can simply bypass one country's controls and source a sensitive commodity elsewhere.

**We've done this before.** Up until 1977, when the United States passed the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA), no country in the world considered the bribing of foreign officials for business purposes to be illegal. Twenty years later, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Anti-Bribery Convention was signed. **We're now beginning to see that same shift with respect to export enforcement.** Like bribing a foreign official, exporting the most sensitive goods and technologies without appropriate safeguards is a collective harm; and we must work collectively as partners – through coordinated and aggressive enforcement action – to prevent these sensitive goods and technologies from falling into the wrong hands.

But it's not enough just to impose multilateral controls; **to be effective, controls need to be aggressively enforced,** not only by the United States but through coordinated work with coalition partners. For the United States and Canada, that means coordinated work by our respective enforcement teams – my Export Enforcement team at the Bureau of Industry of Security (BIS) and Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) here in Canada.

**This partnership is already bearing fruit.** During one of the temporary deployments last year, BIS and CBSA's Counter Proliferation Operations Section (CPOS), working with U.S. Customs and Border Protection, stopped a shipment of drone antennas on the tarmac in Alaska before they could be illegally exported

**Collaboration on enforcement doesn't stop with just us and Canada.** We are also working to coordinate more broadly with our other Five Eyes partners, as well as with ASEAN countries like Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. And just last month, the U.S.-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC) reaffirmed the importance of enforcing export controls in a parallel manner.

**While 2022 required intense work on Russia, Russia was not our only priority.** We remain laser-focused on the risk posed by other nation-states, such as the People's Republic of China (PRC), Iran, and North Korea.

To give a recent example of the challenges we face, just two weeks ago, a California man pled guilty for violating export control laws by secretly funneling sensitive aeronautics software to a Beijing university.

The recipient, Beihang University, had previously been placed on our Entity List for helping to develop the PRC's military rocket systems and unmanned air vehicle systems.

**This case helps illustrate how the domains of national security and of academia are growing increasingly interconnected.** To address this dynamic, we are actively engaging with U.S. academic institutions and research centers, in part through our Academic Outreach Initiative, on ways they can help safeguard their advanced research. We're also working closely with our Canadian counterparts in helping academic institutions protect themselves from current and future threat actors.

**We also changed our policy on how we respond to a host government that is preventing our ability to conduct end-use checks overseas...** Under our new policy, such governments now have a choice. If they cooperate and the end-use checks are successful, then companies will be removed from our Unverified List. On the other hand, if they continue to prevent our end-use checks, we will initiate the process to have companies added to our Entity List.

**After the policy became effective, we were able to complete successful end-use checks in China for the first time in over two years.** In December, we removed 25 Chinese entities from our Unverified List after the satisfactory completion of end-use checks and verification of those entities' bona fides in cooperation. **And the policy has had an impact in other ways as well.** We didn't only remove entities from our Unverified List in December – we also moved nine Russian companies onto the Entity List because of Russia's sustained failure to schedule our end-use checks.

Right now, we have ECO positions located in seven places around the world, in Beijing, Hong Kong, Frankfurt, Singapore, Istanbul, New Delhi, and Dubai. **I'm excited to share that we're now adding two more ECO positions, one in Helsinki and the other in Taiwan.** These new positions, plus our new Export Control Analyst position in Ottawa and our enhanced partnership arrangement with CBSA, mean that we now have more resources devoted to protecting U.S. and Canadian technology from diversion than ever before."

In a [speech](#) marking the opening of the 2022 Massachusetts Export Expo, **Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration Thea Kendler** shared her experience at the Justice Department and how it informs her role enforcing Export Controls.

"Right now, we face new challenges to our security and prosperity. We are seeing national security, foreign policy, and economics intertwine like never before. Authoritarian regimes and non-state bad actors seek to turn the strength that is our economic prosperity, into a weakness they can exploit.

"The list of threats and malign actors is long, and the threat environment is ever changing. we must tailor export controls to ensure that we don't disincentivize your technological leadership and that we return resources to the United States for further innovation and research. **we must make our export controls a multilateral – or plurilateral or bilateral – system as much as possible.**



## Senators Still Want to Strip China's PNTR Status

A group of Senate Republicans are again pushing to strip China of its Permanent Normal Trade Relations status. **The China Trade Relations Act (S 125)** would require a return to the previous process of annual approval of Most Favored Nation status for China. The legislation also would make human rights and trade abuses disqualifying factors for MFN status.

The bill was introduced by Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark), along with Sens. Rick Scott (R-Fla), Ted Budd (R-NC) and J.D. Vance (R-Ohio). **A similar bill, S.785, introduced by Cotton in the previous congress, died in the Finance committee.**

**The China Trade Relations Act would revoke China's permanent most-favored-nation status and return to the pre-2001 status quo**, whereby China's MFN status must be renewed each year by presidential decision. Congress could override the president's extension of MFN by passing a joint resolution of disapproval. **The bill also would expand the list of human-rights and trade abuses under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment that would disqualify China for MFN status, absent a presidential waiver.** The abuses that would make China ineligible for MFN status, absent a presidential waiver, are as follows:

- where people are held against their will;
- performs or otherwise orders forced abortion or sterilization procedures;
- harvests the organs of prisoners without their consent;
- hinders the free exercise of religion;
- intimidates or harasses nationals of the PRC living outside the PRC.or
- engages in systematic economic espionage against the United States, including theft of the intellectual property of United States persons.

## NRC Nixes Cape Town Fuel License

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing an Order to Westinghouse Electric Company LLC suspending NRC license XCOM1252, which authorizes the export of fuel assembly components to Sweden for fabrication of fuel assemblies and subsequent shipment of the completed fuel assemblies to the Republic of South Africa for use in Cape Town's Koeberg Nuclear Power Station.

The suspension is required because the license was issued, in part, based on assurances from the RSA that the components would be made subject to the terms of the Agreement for Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (123 Agreement) between the United States (U.S.) and the Government of South Africa. However, the U.S.-RSA 123 Agreement expired on December 4, 2022, and therefore the assurances that supported issuance of the license are no longer valid.

Talks about a new pact are "ongoing and the parties have resolved to expedite the process," the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy said in a statement on Friday. While the fuel for the Koeberg nuclear facility isn't planned for delivery until early 2024, "urgent resolution is needed to allow Westinghouse Electric Co." to resume supply, the department said.

Bloomberg reports US President Joe Biden was poised in August to extend the existing agreement, before it was allowed to expire.

## Sen. Menendez Calls Out Rifle Exports

Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Bob Menendez (D-N.J.) sent a letter to Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo opposing the Commerce Department's apparent plans to consider granting a license to permit the export of rifles – possibly including assault-style or sniper semiautomatic rifles – to Azerbaijan.

Citing State Department reports that Azerbaijani government forces have participated in extrajudicial killings, torture, and other unlawful treatment of Armenians both during and after the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh War, Menendez noted:

“The export of weapons to an authoritarian country that wages war against a neighbor, blockades a vulnerable population, and commits rampant human rights violations at home is not consistent with the Administration's commitment to democracy and human rights.

“Further, the consideration of this export license further compounds my dismay that the Administration continues to allow the export of assault-style and sniper rifles abroad – even while supporting an assault-style rifle ban domestically – and deepens my reservations about the Department of Commerce having jurisdiction over such exports. As you know, it remains my firm belief that such jurisdiction should be returned to the State Department to ensure the appropriate foreign policy considerations integral to such decisions are taken into account.”

**Secretary Raimondo was no friend of the gun lobby as governor of Rhode Island.** “Three years in a row,” she said in 2019, “I have put in legislation — massively popular, the vast majority of Rhode Islanders support it — [allowing] no more guns in school. The colonel of the state police testified over and over again it would make our kids safer — and the legislature does nothing... They don't belong in our neighborhoods, our schools or nightclubs, wherever,” she told reporters.

## USMCA / Labor Dispute Again.

The Administration for the second time has invoked the US-Mexico-Canada's rapid response labor mechanism against an **American-owned Mexican auto parts plant for continued worker rights abuses**. US Trade Representative Katherine Tai announced that Washington has asked Mexico to review whether workers at the VU facility in Piedras Negras are being denied the right of free association and collective bargaining.

VU Manufacturing is headquartered in Troy, MI, with manufacturing and support facilities in Mexico. The plant's primary focus is on “soft trim” products and assemblies for the Automotive, Marine, and Medical industries.

The facility appeared to take positive actions last year in response to the earlier RRM petition by the United States, but seems to be slipping backward, Ms. Tai said. Ms. Tai has directed the Treasury



Secretary to suspend the final settlement of customs accounts related to entries of goods from the VU facility.

The Administration last month received a RRM petition from two Mexican labor organizations, USTR and the Labor Department found that there is sufficient, credible evidence of a denial of rights enabling the good faith invocation of enforcement mechanisms. Mexico now has 10 days to agree to conduct a review and 45 days to complete the review.

### \*\*\* Briefs \*\*\*

**USTR / Schagrin Named OSI Chief** United States Trade Representative today announced Kenneth Schagrin has been named Assistant United States Trade Representative for the Office of Services & Investment. Schagrin had previously held the position in acting capacity. **The Office of Services and Investment is responsible for facilitating multilateral and bilateral partnerships in the areas of services, financial services, telecommunications, and digital trade.** The Office also manages initiatives involving the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the G20, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the United Nations.

**Senate /Finance GOP Bench Named** Ranking Member Mike Crapo (Idaho) announced three new Republicans will join the panel for the 118th Congress – **one less than Republican had in the last Congress.** The new Republican members are Sens. Ron Johnson (Wisc), Thom Tillis (NC) and Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn). The full Republican roster for Finance includes: ranking Republican Mike Crapo (Idaho), Chuck Grassley (Iowa), John Cornyn (Texas), John Thune (SD), Tim Scott (SC), Bill Cassidy (La), James Lankford (Okla), Steve Daines (Mont), Todd Young (Ind), John Barrasso (Wyo), Ron Johnson (Wisc), Thom Tillis (NC) and Marsha Blackburn (Tenn)

**China / China Select Committee Named** House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries (NY) announced his choices to sit on the newly-created House Select Committee on Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party. **Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL)** is ranking member of the new committee. Filling out the rest of the Democratic roster are Reps. Kathy Castor (Fla), André Carson (Ind), Seth Moulton (Mass), Ro Khanna (Calif), Andy Kim (NJ), Mikie Sherrill (NJ), Haley Stevens (Mich), Jake Auchincloss (Mass), Ritchie Torres (NY) and Shontel Brown (Ohio). Committee Chair Mike Gallagher (R-WI) named his team earlier.

**China / Russia Trade Boomed** last year, providing a lifeline to Russia's beleaguered economy and showing the limits of Western sanctions, according to a new report by the Free Russia Foundation. Moscow boosted imports of technologies critical to its war in Ukraine including semiconductors and microchips from China, the report said.

China's increased purchases of Russian exports, driven by energy sales, more than offset the declines from major Western trading partners. "As the U.S., EU, the U.K. have all scaled back operations with Russia, China has emerged, by a wide margin, to be Russia's most important trade partner," the report says. Based on 40 million entries of customs records obtained by the Free Russia Foundation, the

report offers a granular view of Russia's trade, which was obscured after the imposition of Western sanctions. In April, Russian customs authorities suspended their monthly publication of data on exports and imports, among other statistics, saying at the time that it wanted to avoid "incorrect estimates, speculations and discrepancies in terms of import deliveries." Its January 2022 data are the latest available.

**China / India Trade Targeted** *Reuters reports* that India is considering a number of tariffs and non-tariff steps to cut imports of non-essential consumer and electronic goods, including from China, as trade imbalances concern policymakers. As many as 18 key government ministries, led by the federal trade ministry, met last week to firm up steps first aimed at cutting imports from China, which accounts for nearly a third of India's trade deficit, said the three sources who declined to be named. India has been trying to reduce its trade deficit with China since 2020, when border tensions flared along a contested frontier, but with little success as the country is a key and cheap supplier of goods including active pharmaceutical ingredients, electrical equipment and several chemicals.

**DDTC / DECCS User Group Openings.** The Defense Export Controls and Compliance System (DECCS) User Group (DUG) is a forum for active and regular communication between DECCS users and the Directorate of Defense Trade Controls (DDTC). DUG members identify functional and technical challenges when interacting with DECCS, and provide feedback and input for future DECCS enhancements and system support initiatives.

**DDTC is looking for up to 50 industry volunteers** (representatives of companies, government agencies and third-party organizations) enrolled with DECCS who can provide the end-user point-of-view on issues related to the system. DDTC plans to engage with DUG volunteers when there is system functionality ready for User Acceptance Testing. Time will vary based on testing requested. In total, time will not exceed 20 hours, including participation in the DUG Spring and Fall meetings. The DUG User Group term will span one calendar year. **To express your interest,** email [PM\\_DDTCProjectTeam@state.gov](mailto:PM_DDTCProjectTeam@state.gov) by COB February 28, 2023 and provide your name & company/government affiliation (as applicable)

**USTR / Notorious Markets List Published.** United States Trade Representative released the 2022 Review of Notorious Markets for Counterfeiting and Piracy (the Notorious Markets List). The list highlights prominent and illustrative examples of online and physical markets that reportedly engage in, facilitate, turn a blind eye to, or benefit from substantial piracy or counterfeiting.

USTR first identified notorious markets in the Special 301 Report in 2006. Since February 2011, USTR has published annually the Notorious Markets List separately from the Special 301 Report, to increase public awareness and help market operators and governments prioritize intellectual property enforcement efforts that protect American businesses and their workers. The complete 2022 Notorious Markets List can be found [\[here\]](#).

**CITES / Reptile Smuggler Gets 14 Months.** A Canadian National was sentenced to 14 months for his role in a scheme to purchase and ship to Asia ball pythons, blood pythons, common tegus, Argentine tegus and iguanas, which are protected under Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). Over a seven-year period, Ka

Yeung Marvin Chan and conspirators collectively engaged in at least 107 separate criminal acts, smuggling to Asia a total of 8,738 CITES II protected animals with a retail market value in excess of \$5.13 million. [\[Release\]](#)

**OFAC / Russia Entity List Updates.** February 1 OFAC added 22 names to the entity list associated with Russia- and Cyprus-based arms dealer **Igor Zimenkov** for supporting the Russian war effort, and illicit trading activities in Belarus, Bulgaria, Israel and Latin America. [\[OFAC Announcement\]](#)

**BIS / Iran Aerospace Sanctions** January 31 the Commerce Department's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) imposed restrictions on seven Iranian drone producers, including on the transfers of foreign-made components to them. **Under Secretary of Commerce for Industry and Security Alan Estevez.** "The actions we're taking today, on top of the prior actions by our interagency partners, are intended to smother these entities' access to items that enable Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine and demonstrate our resolve to aggressively use export controls to confront Russia's desperate attempts to source drones from the Iranian regime." [\[88 FR 6621\]](#)

**CFIUS / Truck Tech Transfer "Espionage"** Members of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the US (CFIUS) have recommended the Justice Department file charges of economic espionage against the principals of a San Diego autonomous trucking startup, according to the [Wall Street Journal](#). TuSimple, which raised \$1.25 billion in a public offering in April 2021 was funded principally by Sina Corp, according to Bloomberg. The recommendation for criminal charges, stemmed from concerns that two founders and the current chief executive of the company were improperly transferring technology to a Chinese entity.

**UK / Beneficial Ownership Deadline.** The February 1 deadline for registration with Companies House of the beneficial owners of offshore companies has passed, with about two thirds of owners complying, according to [the Financial Times](#). The register, established by last year's economic crime bill includes an exemption for offshore trusts, whose owners can make a confidential disclosure to authorities.

**Commerce / Graves Touts Controls Impact.** In an opinion piece for [War on the Rocks](#), the University of Texas national security blog, Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves published a recap of the Department's accomplishments, citing "dogs that do not bark" and "Dishwashers, refrigerators, and even electric breast pumps" in the former Red Army's supply chain.

### \*\*\* Calendar \*\*\*

**2023 Washington International Trade Conference**, sponsored by Washington International Trade Association (WITA) *virtually on Zoom, Monday, February 13, and Hybrid, Tuesday, February 14.* [\[Registration\]](#)

**USDA's 99th annual Agricultural Outlook Forum (AOF)**, will be held in-person at the Crystal City Gateway Marriott on *February 23-24, 2023*, and all sessions will be livestreamed on a virtual platform. More than 30 sessions and 100 agriculture leaders and subject matter experts will discuss key issues impacting the sector [\[Info\]](#)

**WITA 2023 Congressional Trade Agenda.** *Friday, March 3, 2023. 9:30 am - 11:00 am ET.*

*Featured Speakers:*

**Sally Laing**, Chief International Trade Counsel, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, Democratic Staff

**Mayur Patel**, Chief Counsel, International Trade, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, Republican Staff.

**Josh Snead**, Republican Chief Trade Counsel, Trade Subcommittee, House Ways and Means Cttee.

**Alexandra Whittaker**, Democratic Chief Trade Counsel; Staff Director Trade Subcommittee, House Ways and Means Cttee. Ronald Reagan Building & International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington, DC [\[Registration\]](#)

### **EU-US Trade & Technology Council: WG10 Roundtable on due diligence**

3 March 2023, 12:30 CET - 3 March 2023, 19:30 CET [hybrid register] TTC Working Group 10 will host a roundtable discussion. The focus of the roundtable will be on promoting inter alia labour rights in supply chains, including the elimination of forced or compulsory labour, and the importance of multistakeholder engagement in trade policy. This event will address (1) legislative and non-legislative initiatives in the EU and US addressing labour rights in global supply chains; (2) strengthening stakeholder capacity by sharing best practices to conduct due diligence; and (3) supporting partner governments in translating commitments to due diligence in global supply chains into concrete actions [\[event website\]](#).

Register [\[register\]](#) by Tuesday 28 February 2022, 18:00 CET / 12:00 EST.