

For Immediate Release

ACCJ Emphasizes Critical Importance of U.S.-Japan Relationship in Meetings with U.S. Policymakers

April 19, 2007 (Washington, DC)—A delegation of U.S. business leaders from the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) concluded a two-day “Doorknock” visit (April 17-18) to Washington, DC. The delegation, led by ACCJ President Charles D. Lake II, met with high-ranking Administration officials and Congressional leaders and emphasized the importance of Japan to the United States as a close ally in Asia and the key role that the U.S.-Japan economic relationship plays as the pace of Asian economic integration increases.

“Given the critical importance of the U.S.-Japan relationship for not only the United States, but also the global economy,” President Lake said, “we discussed a number of steps needed to further enhance the bilateral economic relationship. In the medium-term, the ACCJ urges the U.S. Government to articulate a vision for increased U.S.-Japan economic integration. In light of the political challenges on both sides of the Pacific, as an initial step, a government-to-government process to examine the viability of going forward on a bilateral Economic Integration Agreement (EIA) should be initiated.” Such a government-to-government exchange of information, reinforced by private sector input, could identify issues that must be addressed during the EIA process. Delegation members noted that this message was well received in Washington.

President Lake also expressed sincere hope that the upcoming summit between President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will include a discussion of these issues.

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About the ACCJ

The American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCJ) was established in 1948 by representatives of 40 American companies and has grown into one of the most influential business organizations in Japan. Consisting mainly of executives from American companies, currently the ACCJ has members representing 1,400 companies with offices in Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka. Working closely with the governments of the United States and Japan, business organizations, and others, the ACCJ promotes activities that help achieve its mission of further developing commerce between the United States and Japan, promoting the interests of U.S. companies and members, and improving the international business environment in Japan. Over 60 committees representing various industries play the ACCJ's central role in making policy recommendations through advocacy tools such as the Business White Paper and holding over 500 events and seminars annually on public policy and economic trends. The ACCJ is also committed to promoting charitable events and other CSR activities.

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