

Week Ending Friday, May 22, 1998

Proclamation 7097—World Trade Week, 1998

May 15, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The American economy is experiencing its longest period of sustained growth in more than a generation, with more than 15 million new jobs, the lowest unemployment rate since 1970, and the lowest inflation rate in more than 30 years. Much of this economic expansion can be attributed to our overseas trade. Today, America is the world's leading exporter. Our exports sustain 12 million jobs—jobs that on average, pay more than jobs not tied to exports. The extraordinary vigor of America's economy reflects the 1998 theme of World Trade Week: "Exporting Pays Off."

Our unparalleled capacity to develop and market high-technology products and processes has given us a strong competitive edge in the international marketplace in everything from aerospace to agriculture. Americans have led the world into the Information Age, and we are poised to lead it into an exciting new era of electronic commerce. Also central to our success in the global economy has been our ability to open foreign markets for American goods and services. During the past 5 years, my Administration has negotiated more than 240 new trade agreements and strengthened efforts to eliminate unfair trading practices in order to help American workers and businesses compete in an international arena that is open and fair and where trade rules are enforced.

To keep America growing, and to maintain our leadership in the global economy, we must expand our exports. We must sustain our advantage in information and other technologies by creating a business climate that encourages investment, by continuing our

support of education and research in basic science and technology, and by ensuring that American workers are the best-educated and best-trained work force in the world. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that we will need more than a million new high-skilled workers during the next 10 years to power the information technology field. We must provide working Americans with the skills and training they need to seize these promising employment opportunities.

Our exports and our economic strength depend upon our access to an open, stable, and growing world market. The nations of the world are becoming increasingly intertwined in a global economy. We must continue our efforts to remove foreign barriers to American goods and services, to open new markets, and to keep them open. This week, I will travel to Geneva, Switzerland and address the World Trade Organization to underline just how important free and open trade is to our future prosperity. Fast-track trade authority has been a crucial tool in this endeavor in the past, and it will become increasingly important to our ability to compete in the future with other countries for new markets, new contracts, and new jobs. This traditional trading authority will empower us to negotiate pro-growth, pro-American trade agreements that will maintain the momentum of our economy and ensure that American workers and American businesses can compete on a level playing field with the rest of the world.

America's leadership in building an open, fair world trade system is paying off in rewards for entrepreneurial initiative, higher wages for working Americans, incentives for technological advances and artistic creation, and prosperity for our Nation. By embracing the challenges of competing in the global marketplace in the 21st century, we can ensure continued growth for American businesses, prosperity for working Americans, and a brighter future for us all.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 17 through May 23, 1998, as World Trade Week. I invite the people of the United States to observe this week with ceremonies, activities, and programs that celebrate the potential of international trade.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 10:30 a.m., May 19, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 20. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

United States-Japan Joint Statement on Electronic Commerce

May 15, 1998

Electronic commerce will be an engine of economic growth in the Twenty-first Century, with the potential to invigorate economies by enhancing productivity, streamlining distribution, and revamping corporate structures.

Electronic commerce will enhance the standard of living of citizens in the United States and Japan, as well as the rest of the globe, by creating new, high-paying jobs and opportunities. Small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular, will benefit from new opportunities to sell their products to a worldwide market.

The Governments of the United States and Japan recognize the importance of working together to promote global electronic commerce. We support and endorse the following fundamental principles and policies, which should guide the development of electronic commerce.

I. General Principles

1. The private sector should lead in the development of electronic commerce and in establishing business practices.
2. Both governments should avoid imposing unnecessary regulations or restrictions on electronic commerce. Government actions, when needed, should be clear, transparent, and predictable to the private sector.
3. Governments should encourage effective self-regulation through codes of conduct, model contracts, guidelines, and enforcement mechanisms developed by the private sector.
4. Cooperation and harmonization among all countries, from all regions of the world and all levels of development, will assist in the construction of a seamless environment for electronic commerce.

II. Policy Issues

5. Tariffs.

There are currently no customs duties on electronic transmissions. The United States and Japan will work toward a global understanding that this duty free environment should remain, for free trade in electronic commerce will promote the growth of electronic commerce and economic growth worldwide.

The United States and Japan welcome the announcement of the Quad Ministers to work toward a comprehensive work program in the WTO on the trade-related aspects of electronic commerce, and both nations will actively participate in this process. In the meantime, both nations will adopt a standstill, as outlined in the Quad statement, that preserves the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions.

6. Taxes.

We will actively participate within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development to work toward developing framework conditions for the taxation of electronic commerce. Close cooperation and mutual assistance are necessary to ensure effective tax administration and to prevent tax evasion and avoidance on the Internet.