



The Future of the EU-US Relations What Benefits will the TTIP Bring?



From left to right, panelists and moderator:
Hiddo Houben, Stefanie Jehlitschka, Lake Ray, Christoph Niemann, Skip Jones

On June 19th, the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence was able to assist with another wonderful event promoting the benefits of the upcoming Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the European Union and the United States. This event, hosted by The Delegation of the European Union to the United States, and organized by the German American Chamber of Commerce of Atlanta, alongside various European consulates and chambers of commerce from Miami, was held at the scenic Bankers Club overlooking Biscayne Bay, and allowed local businesspeople and visiting diplomats to gain a better understanding of TTIP.

Following a networking breakfast, the energetic attendees settled in to learn about this incredible trade partnership.

Stefanie Jehlitschka, Vice President, German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern United States, Inc. welcomed the audience. The activities began with an introductory video from European Union Ambassador to the United States João Vale de Almeida, who informed attendees that the TTIP agreement had grand aspirations, stating that it was the "best illustration of how vibrant the relationship between the United States and Europe. It's about setting the gold standard for what we think the world economy should look like."

Immediately following Ambassador Vale de Almeida's remarks, the day's keynote speaker, Hiddo Houben, presented a vibrant lecture to the audience.

Hiddo Houben, as the Minister-Counselor and Head of the Trade and Agriculture Section of the European Delegation to the United States, was an incredibly astute choice to provide a lecture on this promising, but incredibly complex agreement currently under negotiation. A 2003 Yale World Fellow and participating member in the creation of the World Trade Organization (W.T.O), Mr. Houben informed attendees that because the United States and Europe are "the two largest economies in the world" there exists "a perception of mutual benefit on both sides. That is not necessarily the case with trading relationships with other parts of the world." The TTIP agreement would help to shore up and strengthen this relationship in an increasingly complex and competitive globalized world. With the addition of China, Russia, and large parts of the developing world into the global economy, and with no large trade agreements between the U.S and the E.U having occurred since the 1990s, Mr. Houben indicated the time was right for this agreement to go into effect. Mr. Houben informed the captivated guests in attendance that presently, there

This event was organized by the German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern U.S.-Atlanta, hosted by the Delegation of the European Union, and proudly supported by different European Chambers of Commerce in Miami (Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain), European Consulates General in Miami (The Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Spain), the Economic and Development and International Trade in Miami, and the Miami-Florida European Union Center of Excellence.



German American
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Hiddo Houben, Minister-Counselor and Head of the Trade and Agriculture, Delegation of the European Union to the US answering questions (left); Skip Jones, and Lake Ray, (right)

are over 200 negotiators working on each side of the partnership to provide expert insight and ensure that the TTIP agreement is a valuable and dynamic agreement. Despite some speedbumps due to regulatory differences between the United States and Europe in areas such as pharmaceuticals, in which intellectual property rights are a sensitive issues, Mr. Houben was confident the details would be ironed out. He concluded that "The TTIP are about lots of different small things that can add up to something significant when it's taken all together."

Following Mr. Houben's presentation on the benefits of the TTIP agreement, the floor was turned over to a panel for discussion. In addition to Mr. Houben, other participants included Florida House of Representatives, District 12, Lake Ray, Skip Jones, the Ex-

ecutive Director for Europe and Eurasia, Global Markets, U.S. Department of Commerce, as well as Cristoph Niemann, Oceanfreight Manager, MIA-FS, Kuehne + Nagel Inc. This panel, moderated by Stefanie Jehlitschka, Vice President, German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern United States, Inc., and composed from those in both the public and private sectors, provided a great overview of the variety of issues that relate to the TTIP agreement. Representative Ray, a former Civil Engineer who is interested in increasing Florida's manufacturing economy indicated that this deal would be incredibly beneficial, continuing "we're finding, as you know, that the EU wants products from the US, and the U.S. wants products from the E.U, because we know the quality of these products." Mr. Niemen indicat-

ed that the concern over privacy rights is one issue that is somewhat contentious, but that the concerns after the Snowden affair are quite overblown and that "Both sides are working together. There have been long discussions between the European Commission and the department of commerce over the safe harbor framework, which predates the snowden issues. Naturally, there were questions raised post snowden about this framework continuing, but both sides are working together to move forward from this. It has been a distraction, but ultimately it won't be a killer issue."

Those in attendance undoubtedly learned a great deal about the developing TTIP agreement and the accompanying concerns and promises of this new deal. Armed with this information, it is the hope of MEUCE that the attendees, upon returning to their communities and places of employment continue to share, and disseminate this information. In the meantime, we at the MEUCE will continue to do so ourselves.

By Jason Chohonis



For more information on the TTIP program, please visit the Delegation of the European Union to the US website: <http://www.euintheus.org/transatlantic-trade-and-investment-partnership-ttip/>



For other events pertaining to the European Union, please visit our website at <http://miamieuc.fiu.edu/>,



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Stefanie Jehlitschka, Vice President, German American Chamber of Commerce of the Southern United States, Inc.



From left to right, panelists and moderator: Hiddo Houben, Skip Jones, Lake Ray, Christoph Niemann, and Stefanie Jehlitschka



Hiddo Houben, Minister-Counselor and Head of the Trade and Agriculture, Delegation of the European Union to the US (left); and Hon. Jürgen Borsch, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Miami



From left to right, among the audience: Dr. Volker Anding, Amb. of Germany (ret.); Javier Pagalday, Deputy Consul General of Spain in Miami; Hon. Jürgen Borsch, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany in Miami



From left to right: Lake Ray, Florida House of Representatives, District 12; Hon. Philippe Létriliart, Consul General of France in Miami; Brian Siegal, Director of AJC Global Jewish Advocacy



Hiddo Houben, Minister-Counselor and Head of the Trade and Agriculture, Delegation of the European Union to the US (center), with Italian-American Chamber of Commerce Southeast representatives