



AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

MEDIA RELEASE

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ACCI PROMOTES BUSINESS CASE AT GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS

Statement by Mr Peter Anderson, Chief Executive

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI), Australia's largest and most representative business organisation, has today concluded its participation in two days of talks at the *Major Economies Business Forum on Energy Security and Climate Change* in Washington DC. The meeting was convened by the US Chamber of Commerce, ACCI's United States counterpart organisation, and was attended by ACCI's Director of Economics & Industry Policy, Greg Evans.

The key resolution of the talks was to encourage governments to reach a meaningful global agreement for which Copenhagen will be a decisive meeting. It was equally resolved that in moving to an agreement, the key concerns of the international business community need to be addressed.

A successful agreement must promote economic development, international competitiveness and open global trade for business. The possibility of green border taxes on imported goods was strongly rejected.

Measures to increase energy efficiency through technology adoption should be encouraged and available to developing nations. Security of supply is essential, and business urged removal of many regulatory requirements that prevent infrastructure being established.

It was clear from the talks that across the G20 countries, there are a range of domestic policy responses to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, including cap and trade systems, advancing technological responses and reducing emissions from deforestation.

It was also apparent from the talks that the United States Congress is unlikely to have locked in a legislative cap and trade scheme in advance of the Copenhagen meeting.

Arising from these global business talks, it is clear that the Australian Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme (CPRS), in its current form, imposes some of the most onerous requirements in terms of its coverage of emissions and has a more limited free allocation of permits.

ACCI has reaffirmed its concerns about the impact of the CPRS on the competitiveness of Australian industry. In the absence of a clear and comprehensive international agreement, the economic adjustment task will be an unreasonable burden to sustain if imposed unilaterally.

We caution against unilateral action especially given Australia's much higher trade dependency than other major economies and the prospect that our key trading partners are less likely to impose the same significant domestic emission reduction constraints on business.

Business certainty can only be secured if international competitiveness is not threatened.

For further information:

Peter Anderson	Chief Executive	02 6273 2311 / 0417 264 862
Brett Hogan	Director of Communications	03 9668 9950 / 0407 273 884

ACCI represents over 350,000 businesses in every State and Territory and all industries. Our network employs around 4 million employees, ranging from the top 100 companies to tens of thousands of small and medium businesses.

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