

UNITED STATES MISSION
TO THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

OFFICE OF THE
AMBASSADOR

March 2, 2006

H.E. Mr. Ujal Singh Bhatia
Ambassador
Permanent Mission of India to the WTO
Rue du Valais 9
1202 Geneva, Switzerland

Dear Mr. Ambassador:

Further to paragraphs 25 through 27 of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, and in accordance with paragraphs 7 and 11 (b) of Annex C of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, the United States, as the coordinating Member, hereby conveys, on behalf of a number of interested Members, a collective request in the Postal and Courier Services including Express Delivery Services subsector.

Sincerely,



Peter F. Allgeier
Ambassador

cc: Ambassador Carlo Trojan, European Communities
Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki, Japan
Ambassador Crawford Falconer, New Zealand

Collective Request for Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery

Further to paragraphs 25 through 27 of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, and in accordance with paragraphs 7 and 11 (b) of Annex C of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, the Mission of the United States of America is pleased to present the delegation of [recipient Member] with a collective request in Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery, on behalf of the following interested Members: the European Communities, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States.

This request identifies specific objectives for liberalization of Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery, while recognizing the flexibilities provided for individual developing country Members in accordance with Article XIX.2 of the GATS. The aforementioned interested Members are also deemed to be recipients of this request.

In accordance with paragraph 7 of Annex C of the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration, this collective request is intended to complement, and not supersede, the bilateral request-offer negotiations and the specificity of bilateral requests.

The Mission of the United States has the further pleasure to invite India to participate in a plurilateral discussion of this request, which will be organized in Geneva during the Services cluster taking place from 27 March to 7 April, 2006.

Please note that 19 other Members have received this collective request in Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery, from the aforementioned group of interested Members, and have also been invited to this plurilateral meeting.

The aforementioned interested Members reserve the right to modify the content of this request. Additional interested Members may also be identified in the future.

Any comments regarding this request, including written questions of a technical nature in advance of the plurilateral meeting, may be addressed to:

Christopher Melly
United States Delegation
+1 202-395-9581
Christopher_Melly@ustr.eop.gov

Alicia Greenidge
U.S. Mission Geneva
41-22-508-5394
Alicia_Greenidge@ustr.eop.gov

Request: *New and improved commitments that reflect meaningful progress toward full market access and national treatment for delivery services¹ in the area of Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery.*

We recognize that government intervention may be necessary to ensure the universal supply of quality basic postal services, including through direct government-supplied services and the designation of monopolies and exclusive suppliers. Therefore, in making this request, we understand that the extent to which Members may be able to offer commitments on universal postal services will vary from one Member to another. At the same time, we expect Members to be more forthcoming with strong commitments for activities that are carried out under competitive conditions.

¹ For purposes of this request, delivery services include the collection, sorting, transport and delivery of items.

In formulating new and improved commitments, we encourage Members to consider the following key objectives.

Key Objectives:

Sector Description

1. Provide a basis to obtain specific commitments covering those activities captured by “Postal Services” and “Courier Services,” including Express Delivery Services (CPC 7511 and CPC 7512, respectively), from as many WTO Members as possible.
2. Clarify the scope of application by confirming that the sector description encompasses all competitive service suppliers, including holders of postal monopoly rights if they should compete to supply the scheduled service.
3. Clarify the parameters of covered postal services to ensure that express delivery or other high-value services are distinguished from universal postal services.
4. Provide clear descriptions of covered activities
5. Achieve the fullest possible coverage of
 - a. Basic delivery of all items (parcels and packages, documents, printed matter, hybrid mail, goods, or other items)
 - b. Express delivery of all items (parcels and packages, documents, printed matter, goods, or other items)

Market Access Commitments

Provide substantially unrestricted market access for the supply of Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery, that are carried out under competitive conditions.

National Treatment Commitments

Provide effective national treatment for the supply of Postal and Courier Services, including Express Delivery, that are carried out under competitive conditions.

Additional Commitments

Undertake additional commitments, where possible, to establish or maintain appropriate measures:

- To address unreasonable practices by dominant suppliers that adversely affect the conditions of competition for postal and courier services, including express delivery (such appropriate measures may include the application of accounting separation and disclosure requirements or rate regulation),
- Where a specifically committed service is subject to sectoral licensing, to ensure that licensing requirements are transparent and reasonable, and
- Where a specifically committed service is subject to sectoral regulation, to ensure that the regulatory body is separate from, and not accountable to, any supplier of such a service.