

December 2, 2009

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA), we are writing to thank you for setting in motion the interagency review of U.S. export control policy and practice.

AIA strongly endorses the view that the current system must be updated to address both the national security challenges we face today, as well as the evolving technology and competitive landscape. We have long advocated for a more predictable, efficient and transparent technology control regime that advances our national security interests. An effective export control system must safeguard critical technologies, as well as facilitate collaboration with our closest allies and international partners. The review you have called for holds the potential to generate significant progress toward that end.

We believe there are several potential reform initiatives that are ripe for early action by the Administration, would not require new legislation, and would go a long way towards developing such a system, including –

1. Establishment of transparent and specific criteria to identify those militarily critical and sensitive defense and space technologies that must be subject to the most rigorous controls
2. Facilitation of timely technology flows between the U.S. and our closest allies and partners, particularly in support of defense and national security programs important to the U.S. Government
3. Adoption of procedures to ensure any required Defense Department reviews associated with a proposed release of U.S. technology properly balance both policy and technical considerations, and are completed in a timely and consistent manner
4. Update of the treatment of the next-generation of aerospace and defense technologies, such as Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS), under U.S. and multilateral export control regimes

5. Review of export control compliance requirements to improve comprehension and implementation, particularly among small and medium-sized firms, as well as a review of resource requirements to raise confidence in the effectiveness of U.S. enforcement efforts

We believe that immediate attention on these matters, together with ratification of the pending bilateral defense trade cooperation treaties with the United Kingdom and Australia, will advance our country's national security interests.

Previous modernization efforts have met with varying degrees of success. Experience suggests that critical factors in enabling meaningful reform include sustained oversight by senior Administration officials, as well as effective consultation with Congress and the private sector. We stand ready to work with you and your Administration to ensure that this newly initiated review yields meaningful progress towards a 21st century technology control regime.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

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Cc: The Honorable Hillary Clinton, Secretary of State
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