

Columbia University
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Jagdish Bhagwati
University Professor

August 31, 2011

Mr. Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the window of opportunity for a robust deal on Doha Round is closing, with the United States now about to enter into an election mode, we make an appeal for Presidential leadership in the United States to put Doha into closure along with the three Free Trade Agreements that finally seem close to passage by bipartisan agreement.

The fear of the labour unions that trade with the poor countries produces poor in the rich countries is mistaken. The demand of the business lobbies that want ever more concessions from others is excessive. The contention of some experts that the gains from Doha are minuscule is flawed in neglecting the costs of the failure of Doha and the ensuing damage to the WTO. The retribution by a protectionist public is greatly exaggerated: many jobs today depend on both exports and imports and the polls reflect that.

President Obama: you have not failed to step up to the plate on issues like the repeal of the Don't Ask and Don't Tell policy in the armed forces. You can do so again to carry Doha past the finish line. You were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for the multilateralism that you promised. You can earn it with leadership on Doha, a multilateral venture par excellence.

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Claude Barfield
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Former Secretary of Commerce and Industry, Mexico

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