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Dear USTR Colleagues:

The Information Technology Industry Council, TechAmerica, and the Telecommunications Industry Association appreciate the important work that USTR does to ensure foreign market access and enforce international agreements with our trading partners. It is with this purpose that we seek your support on an issue many of our member companies are facing with respect to the government of the Republic of Korea.

Korea is beginning a project to upgrade a government telecommunications network to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). While we and our members applaud Korea's desire to upgrade its network, we are concerned that the project requires that the new network contain a domestic encryption standard algorithm known as ARIA. Such a requirement could provide unfair advantages to local Korean producers of VoIP network equipment and devices and, as a consequence, conflict with Korea's commitment under WTO's Government Procurement Agreement and the spirit of the Technical Barriers to Trade Agreement.

We appreciate and share a common desire to secure VoIP networks, but the mandating of any encryption standards that have not been developed and vetted through an international standard setting body such as the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), could significantly complicate interoperability of the government's network with global

networks as well as devices operating on its network. For example, the Korean government specifies in its proposal the use of both ARIA and IETF protocols, including Transport Layer Security (TLS) and Secure Realtime Protocol (SRTP). While those two IETF protocols are widely incorporated into products offered by international VoIP equipment manufacturers, ARIA has not yet been integrated into existing product lines much less gone through the international standards process to ensure interoperability and compatibility with existing international standards.

The IETF, which has developed a number of international standards with respect to Internet protocols, including VoIP, has already established the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) as the encryption standard for VoIP, setting it as the required baseline encryption algorithm to provide both interoperability and ensure network security.

We appreciate USTR's continued efforts on behalf of our members to ensure that the Republic of Korea not only live up to its international trade commitments, but recognize the important contributions of the international standards development process to ensuring the efficient and secure interoperability of technology.

Please contact Nick Fetchko, TIA Director for International and Government Affairs, with any questions (202-346-3246, [nfetchko@tiaonline.org](mailto:nfetchko@tiaonline.org)).



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