

ILLINOIS INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS CALENDAR

February 2, 2026

The **Illinois International Business Calendar** is published by the International Trade Association of Greater Chicago (ITA/GC). The **Calendar** is also available on our website: www.itagc.org. It is published every Friday, and available at no charge.

Inclusion Policy: As a public service to the international business community, we publish a listing of **international business events** for which we receive **written** notification, preferably by e-mail (info@itagc.org). Any organization may submit events that would be of interest to **and are open to** the Illinois international business community. There is no charge. All calendar listings are subject to the editor's discretion. Inclusion of an event does not imply endorsement by any of the sponsoring organizations.

Founded in 1978, the International Trade Association of Greater Chicago (ITA/GC) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)6 voluntary business association dedicated to promoting international commerce in all its forms. The ITA/GC provides a forum for the exchange of practical information and insight within the international business community. Members share interests in import and export matters, in international investment, alliance, and licensing opportunities, and – in the broader sense – doing business across the world.

The ITA/GC's focus is on practicality: on building knowledge and enabling relationships that help people do international business. While our scope of interest is diverse – all aspects of trading and commercial activity across all geographies and all industries – our work is simple: to help others gain understanding that is personal, current and actionable.

New events, and events with additional/revised information, are indicated in Green.

FEATURED ITA/GC PROGRAMS

HELPING YOU GAIN UNDERSTANDING THAT IS PERSONAL, CURRENT & ACTIONABLE

Feb. 18 BUDGET-SMART TRANSLATION FOR GLOBAL BUSINESS. Luncheon program sponsored by the **International Trade Association of Greater Chicago**. Presentation by **Peter Argondizzo**, CEO, Argo Translation, who will examine why translation is no longer a “nice to have,” but a strategic advantage for any company operating on the global stage. He’ll look at how language can open doors to new markets, strengthen customer trust, and reduce operational risk. He’ll also highlight practical, budget-friendly approaches that help teams stretch their resources without sacrificing quality. From using AI-assisted workflows to building long-term assets like translation memory and glossaries, attendees will leave with actionable steps to reduce costs today and improve efficiency tomorrow. 11:45 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Carlucci Rosemont, 6111 North River Road, Rosemont, IL. ITA/GC Members & their guests - \$50; Non-members - \$75. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/budget-smart-translation-for-global-business-tickets-1981880595211>.

Of Note:

New CBP Forced Labor Portal Now Active: Effective January 21, CBP now requires all of the following reviews to be submitted through the Forced Labor Portal: Withhold Release Order (WRO)/Finding admissibility reviews; Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA) applicability reviews; UFLPA exception requests; Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) exception requests. The portal can be accessed [here](#). CBP has also published several helpful resources: A [Quick Reference Guide](#) and an [instructional video](#).

Countries Expected to Grow the Most in 2026: From Venezuela (-3.0%) to Guyana (+23.0%), the *Visual Capitalist* chart depicts [global GDP growth forecasts](#). Global real GDP growth is projected to be 3.1% in 2026, slightly lower than the 3.2% forecast for 2025.

Cambodia vs. Guatemala for Manufacturing: Writing in the [China Law Blog](#), Dan Harris opines: “For U.S. companies making labor-intensive products and looking to exit China, Cambodia and Guatemala come up repeatedly as lower-cost alternatives. I am bullish on Guatemala, but cautious on Cambodia. This is not because Cambodia cannot manufacture. It can. The issue is control. Cambodia’s risk profile is harder to manage and more likely to create problems during investor due diligence, bank due diligence, or an acquisition.”

The America First Investment Pledges: How Are They Structured and Are They Realistic?: In [Policy Brief 26-2](#), the Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) examines closely the Trump administration's "America First" agenda and bi-lateral negotiations with allies and partners to encourage them to invest in US industrial and infrastructure projects. The [White House investment tracker](#), which records both private and official investments, shows a total figure of \$9.6 trillion. In a recent [briefing](#), President Trump used a figure of \$18 trillion; the basis for this claim is not clear.

Readout of Ambassador Greer's Meeting with Mexican Secretary of Economy Marcelo Ebrard:

Ambassador Greer [met](#) [January 28] with Mexican Secretary of Economy Marcelo Ebrard to discuss bilateral trade relations and the upcoming USMCA Joint Review. Both sides recognized substantial progress in recent months and agreed to continue intensive engagement to address non-tariff barriers. In addition, they agreed to begin formal discussions on possible structural and strategic reforms in the context of the first USMCA Joint Review.

U.S. Population Growth Slows Due to Historic Decline in Net International Migration: Population growth in the United States has slowed significantly with an increase of only 1.8 million, or 0.5%, between July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025, according to the new Vintage 2025 population estimates released today by the [U.S. Census Bureau](#). The slowdown in U.S. population growth is largely due to a historic decline in net international migration, which dropped from 2.7 million to 1.3 million in the period from July 2024 through June 2025, according to the assistant division chief for Estimates and Projections at the Census Bureau.

China Turning to Brazil Soybeans after Meeting US Purchase Pledge: Citing a Bloomberg report, [Farm Policy News](#) writes, "China, the world's largest soybean importer, has ramped up orders for Brazilian cargoes of the oilseed after meeting an initial shipment volume from the US as part of a trade truce with Washington." Separately, according to Reuters, "on November 18, Brazilian soybeans for shipment in December to China were priced at \$507.90 per metric ton, below \$516.90 for U.S. Gulf supplies and \$510.50 for U.S. Pacific Northwest origin, on a cost-and-freight basis, excluding tariffs. At those levels, China would have paid roughly \$31 million to \$108 million more for 12 million tons of U.S. soybeans than for Brazilian cargoes."

The Largest U.S. Trading Partners in 2025: According to this handy [visualization](#) by the *Visual Capitalist*, U.S. bilateral trade reached \$4.7 trillion between January and October 2025, in a volatile year for trade policy. The European Union accounted for 18.8% of all U.S. trade in the first 10 months of 2025, valued at \$883.3 billion; China ranks as America's fourth-largest trading partner, with U.S. imports declining 26.7%, given rising tensions.

U.S. withdraws from 66 International Organizations: In a January 7 [presidential memorandum](#), the White House announced it had determined that "it is contrary to the interests of the United States to remain a member of, participate in, or otherwise provide support to" 66 international organizations and agreements and ordered relevant U.S. agencies to withdraw from them immediately. The final version is mostly consistent with business advocacy in favor of preserving U.S. membership in organizations involved in standard setting and commercial dispute resolution.

Industry-level Detail Provides New Insights on the Growing Space Economy: The U.S. Census Bureau released January 13 the first ever [Quarterly Workforce Indicators](#) (QWI) at the national industry level. These data will allow users to view and download economic indicators such as employment, job creation, earnings and other measures of employment flows for six-digit North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. In 2024, nearly one-half of all new hires in the Space Economy cluster were under the age of 35.

Cyberattacks on Logistics Are Set to Double in 2026: A [new report](#) from Everstream Analytics finds that cyberattacks targeting logistics companies are expected to double in 2026, following several years of sharp growth. The research tracks incidents affecting carriers, ports, 3PLs, and other logistics providers and shows attacks are up nearly 1,000% since 2021. [Article appeared in [Supply Chain 24/7](#)]

Restoring American Semiconductor Manufacturing Leadership through an Agreement on Trade & Investment with Taiwan: According to a Commerce Department [press release](#), on January 15 the American Institute in Taiwan and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States signed "a historic trade deal that will drive a massive reshoring of America's semiconductor sector. This unprecedented commitment will strengthen U.S. economic resilience, create high-paying jobs, and bolster national security." The agreement establishes a strategic economic partnership between the United States and Taiwan to decisively strengthen U.S. domestic semiconductor supply chains and secure America's technological and industrial leadership.

Chicago 2050: A Plan for Economic Growth & Jobs: World Business Chicago has just released this updated report from its 2012 version, laying out an updated set of priority industries and strategies for growth, backed by rigorous analysis that helped identify industries based on economic impact and job density. The report is available for free download [here](#).

Who Has the World's Oil, and Who Can Actually Produce It: Following the U.S. President's escapade in Venezuela, [Visual Capitalist](#) compiled a chart comparing proven oil reserves and daily production across the world's top oil producers, revealing stark contrasts between output-heavy producers and those sitting on vast untapped resources. The U.S. produces oil at almost twice the rate of major competitors Russia and Saudi Arabia, thanks to its booming shale industry.

CBP Mandates Electronic Refunds Effective February 6: As reported in Barnes Richardson's [Trade Express Highlights](#), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) will [issue all refunds electronically](#), effective February 6, 2026, except where a valid waiver applies. The transition away from paper checks applies to all importers, brokers, filers, sureties, service providers, facility operators, foreign-trade zone operators and carriers, and any designated third parties listed on CBP Form 4811 as outlined in the [interim final rule](#).

NOW OPEN: Registration for EXIM 2026 Annual Conference: The Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM) has officially opened [registration](#) for their 2026 Annual Conference, taking place on April 29-30 in Washington, D.C. This year's program will center on the Bank's "Buy American, Build the Future" initiative, and the four strategic priorities to carry out President Trump's vision of America's reindustrialization: Bringing EXIM Back to Basics to put American Jobs First; American Energy Dominance; Supply Chain Security; Industries of the Future.

Beyond the Headlines: How Trade Agreements Are Reshaping Business: A recently released [McKinsey article](#) notes that while the recent proliferation of regional and bilateral trade agreements are moderating the impact of U.S. tariffs, they are also reducing non-tariff barriers and altering trade flows. The agreements, combined with industrial-policy measures, create significant opportunities for companies to access new markets.

McKinsey's Most-read Geopolitics Articles in 2025: The world's business landscape has entered an age of strategic complexity. In 2025, [McKinsey's most-read Geopolitics articles](#) reflected how tariffs, trade realignments, and regionalization are rewriting the rules of global business. Success now depends on agility, diversification, and the ability to see opportunity in uncertainty.

USMCA/NAFTA: The Peterson Institute for International Economics has conducted extensive research on the costs, benefits, and opportunities of trade among the United States, Canada, and Mexico. It has published a [Guide](#) to explain why the USMCA remains at the core of the three countries' relationship, what's at stake in many different aspects of their interdependence, and possible paths forward for negotiators to try to resolve. Concomitantly, it has a [page](#) that provides updates on the negotiations.

Country Commercial Guides Updated: The U.S. Department of Commerce's [Country Commercial Guides](#) have been updated. For each country, the Guide includes current information on: Doing Business in; Leading Sectors for US Exports & Investment; Customs, Regulations & Standards; Selling US Products & Services; Digital Economy; Business Travel; Investment Climate Statement. There is no charge to access & download the report(s).

SIDO Announces New-to-Export Training: The State International Development Organization (SIDO) has announced a practical approach to export training that will provide you with expert advice, guidance and resources to develop a strategy and plan to begin exporting. SIDO's program is flexible in addressing your needs and intentional in maximizing your time commitment. It includes 10 hours of virtual training over four weeks. Details are [here](#).

* * * * *

Feb. 2 INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT. Webinar, sponsored by the World Trade Research Institute, will teach you how to learn about foreign government opportunities and the assistance available for winning bids. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CST. Fee: \$89. For information & registration, please see: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/hzuep4q>.

Feb. 3 - EXHIBIT WITH THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AT EXPO MANUFACTURA, MONTERREY, MEXICO. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's Office of Trade and Investment invites Illinois small businesses to exhibit in the Illinois Pavilion at Expo Manufactura 2026. With over 500 exhibitors and 19,000 visitors, Expo Manufactura is the most important meeting place for the manufacturing and processing industry in Mexico. Illinois companies who qualify for this mission will receive the following: *Exhibit space; 25 - 75% partial reimbursement of lodging and airfare costs in accordance with ISTEP guidelines; Briefing material; Pre-show promotion; Assistance with travel logistics; Optional pre-qualified and scheduled B2B matchmaking; Interpreter services during the show and meetings.* Participation Fee: \$1,000. Application Deadline: December 12, 2025. For information & application, please contact: chris.sedgwick@illinois.gov.

Feb. 3 - *USKGZBC BUSINESS DELEGATION TO THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC.* The US-Kyrgyzstan Business Council's business delegation to Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan is organized in Partnership with: The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic; The Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in the United States of America; and The Embassy of the United States of America in the Kyrgyz Republic. This delegation is designed for U.S. companies seeking informed engagement and actionable insight into one of Central Asia's most open and reform-oriented markets. Participants will engage policymakers, business practitioners, U.S. Embassy leadership, and the international business community in a focused, time-efficient program structured to support concrete trade and investment outcomes. The delegation will prioritize sectors of strategic importance to both the Kyrgyz Republic and the U.S. business community, including critical minerals, information and communications technology, banking, agriculture, healthcare, energy, transportation, education, and related industries. The program is intended as a practical entry point for companies evaluating near-term opportunities or seeking to advance existing interests in the Kyrgyz market and the wider region. Application (<https://pci.jotform.com/form/253444040242142>) is due **January 9**.

Feb. 3 *SUCCESS ON HER TERMS: DECIDING WHAT MATTERS MOST.* Webinar sponsored by Women Entrepreneurs Grow Global. Presentation by **Nancy Sharp**, CEO, Food For Thought Enterprises, who will discuss: Making decisions aligned with goals; Determining who you are and what you stand for; Ensuring practical risk management; Using wealth intentionally to create impact; Deciding what matters most. 11:00 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1mRCRKjQTaKpsDUACeMiXQ?mc_cid=6caed598cc&mc_eid=6499c7d108#/registration.

Feb. 3 *SUPPLY CHAIN STRATEGIES IN THE NEW AGE OF TARIFFS.* Hybrid event, sponsored by the International Trade Council of Greater Kansas, will address: *A global trade update — how we got here and what's driving the latest tariff actions; What's been working (and what hasn't) in tariff mitigation strategies, nearly a year into the current trade cycle; How technology is helping companies adapt, forecast, and strengthen supply chains amid volatility.* 3:30 p.m. CST. Keystone CoLAB, 800 East 18th Street, Kansas City, MO. ITC Members – No fee; Non-members - \$15. For information & registration, please see: <https://itcgkc.org/event-6425275>.

Feb. 4 *WTO MATTERS: WTO REFORM - PART 1.* Webinar, sponsored by the Washington International Trade Association, will examine the reforms needed to keep the institution effective and relevant. Speakers include: Ambassador **Joseph Barloon**, Deputy United States Trade Representative and Chief of Mission for the Permanent Mission of the United States to the World Trade Organization; Ambassador **Petter Ølberg**, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Norway to the World Trade Organization; Ambassador **Matthew Wilson**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative-Designate of Barbados to the World Trade Organization; **Angela Ellard** (Moderator), Senior Fellow (non-resident), Center for Strategic and International Studies; former Deputy Director General, World Trade Organization. 8:00 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6xfBuRG0TfqYjvRxt-BT3A#/registration.

Feb. 4 *THE SECURITIZATION OF TRADE: WHERE IS GLOBALIZATION GOING? A CONVERSATION WITH CHRYSTIA FREELAND.* Virtual program sponsored by the Peterson Institute for international Economics. We see an increasing weaponization of trade and threats of tariffs used for hardcore geopolitics. How should we interpret what is happening and what the consequences will be? How does this weaponization affect Canada and the upcoming review—if it happens at all—of the trade agreement between the United States, Canada, and Mexico? (USMCA). What went wrong with globalization and how can we move forward? Join us for a conversation with **Chrystia Freeland**, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister, Canada; Advisor to President Zelensky of Ukraine. 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://petersoninstituteforinternationaleconomics.formtitan.com/ftproject/event-registration-form?campaignid=701PH00001GdF5aYAF&type=tw&contact_id=003PH00000nb25FYAQ.

Feb. 4 *OPERATIONALIZING THE AFRICAN MEDICINES AGENCY: STRATEGY, SUSTAINABLE FINANCING & INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT.*

FINANCING & INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT. Virtual program sponsored by the Corporate Council on Africa's U.S. - Africa Health Security and Resilience Initiative. Presentation by Dr. **Delese Mimi Darko**, Director General of the African Medicines Agency (AMA) who will share insights from her leadership in operationalizing the African Medicines Agency, including the strategic planning process, plans for implementing sustainable financing mechanisms, including donor funding and user fees as well as opportunities for private-sector engagement in supporting AMA's operationalization. This discussion will highlight how alignment between AMA priorities and private-sector needs can help advance market access, sector growth, and stronger regulatory systems across Africa. 8:00 – 9:00 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: <https://events.corporatecouncilonafrica.com/africanmedicineagency/home>.

Feb. 4 *EXPORTING TO AUSTRALIA: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW.* Webinar, sponsored by the World Trade Research Institute, will cover advantages and opportunities for exporting to Australia and how to sell duty-free through the U.S. – Australia Free Trade Agreement. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CST. Fee: \$89. For information & registration, please see: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/wjgn2mc>.

Feb. 4 *FROM IDEA TO MARKET: BUILDING Ms. JETSETTER BEYOND THE IDEA STAGE.* Webinar sponsored by Women Entrepreneurs Grow Global. Presentation by **Tracey McGhee**, Founder and CEO, Ms. Jetsetter, who will share: *Moving beyond the idea to action; Creating retail traction through relationships and readiness; Building a business to stand on its own.* 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3593901542464699736?mc_cid=f773903653&mc_eid=6499c7d108.

Feb. 4 *IMPORTING STRATEGIES TO LOWER YOUR TARIFF BURDEN.* Webinar, sponsored by World Trade Center Utah, will discuss the Foreign-Trade Zone (FTZ) program, a tool that helps companies reduce duties, improve cash flow, and streamline the handling of imported goods. 11:00 – 11:30 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/JVQvLs_ZQd6ubhJ14OkOrQ#/registration.

Feb. 4 *BUYING DDP: PROTECTION AGAINST CUSTOMS COMPLIANCE LIABILITY?* Webinar, sponsored by Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, will explore some of the risks involved in purchasing on a DDP basis and how to minimize those risks. 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. CST. Fee: \$250. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.strtrade.com/training/events/upcoming-webinars/buying-ddp-protection-against-customs-compliance-liability>.

Feb. 5 *INDONESIA OUTLOOK 2026: ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL UPDATE.* Webinar, sponsored by the American Indonesian Chamber of Commerce and the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council. Speakers from Castle Asia include **James Castle**, Founder & CEO, and **Ian Betts**, Research and Development Advisor. Discussion topics include: *Implications for the economy of possible changes to direct elections; Indonesia's foreign policy: Venezuela, US, Middle East, China; How Indonesia's trade agreements (recently concluded or in the works) will affect growth and employment; Tax policy review; Evaluation of policies and approaches of the new Finance Minister- especially deficit financing; Are US policies/practices pushing Indonesia more towards China's economic model; If so, what are the implications for US firms.* 7:30 – 8:45 a.m. CST. NO fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://app.associationsphere.com/Event/EventInfo?prm=fNMmmWacy05sbM4j0450bbXNowdZhW0WUV80dbVOyWe5kr5WEDe4vStsmkwicdMacjVQFgAGOVCkLsvyRZ9w1QrDAZLKWDdOWG3yI5fRKxFgcsG0bky8MUQ1ig2MeRJhUNKuwFRxONnoNTmReUqEXqvQEbbmxGexN3o_IThjLjF38dcvMdwOraC7kXhIMiheiJ3sc7TJQ1fU606-Aw2S_O16GKJAoOmQuqgaGBYYL60uUf6xAdGw8cMbxRuN9tFf0.

Feb. 5 *ANTIDUMPING.* Webinar, sponsored by the World Trade Research Institute, will provide the information needed to help you know what to expect and how to participate in antidumping investigations. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CST. Fee: \$89. For information & registration, please see: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/2n4w43r>.

Feb. 6 **2026 CONGRESSIONAL TRADE AGENDA.** Hybrid event sponsored by the Washington International Trade Association. Congressional Trade Leaders will share their perspectives at WITA's annual overview of the Hill's Trade Agenda. This will be an OFF-THE-RECORD discussion of the critical trade issues that Congress may address in the coming year. Featured Speakers: **Virginia Lenahan**, Chief Counsel, International Trade, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, Democratic Staff; **Molly Newell**, Chief Counsel, International Trade, U.S. Senate Committee on Finance, Republican Staff; **Josh Snead**, Republican Chief Trade Counsel, Trade Subcommittee, House Ways and Means Committee; **Alexandra Whittaker**, Democratic Chief Trade Counsel, Staff Director, Trade Subcommittee, House Ways and Means Committee. 8:30 – 10:00 a.m. CST. WITA Members (Virtual) - \$40; Non-members -\$70. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.wita.org/events/2026-cta/>.

Feb. 9 - 13 **BCIU COMMERCIAL SPACE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MISSION TO INDIA.** Certified Trade Mission organized by BCIU in partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce will travel to Bengaluru and New Delhi. It is designed to advance U.S. space industry success in the Indian commercial space sector by exploring partnership opportunities with Indian government agencies and private firms in joint research and development, licensing, and co-development of space technologies. The delegation will be undertaken in conjunction with a senior-level interagency U.S. Government delegation visit, including the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Defense, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, reinforcing the strategic importance of advancing bilateral space cooperation. For information & an application (deadline: January 16), please see: <https://bciu.zohobackstage.com/BCIUCOMmercialSpaceBusinessMissionIndia>.

Feb. 9 - 10 **CHINA CONFERENCE: SOUTHEAST ASIA 2026.** Hybrid event, sponsored by SCMP, convenes leading diplomats, policymakers, business executives, technology innovators, and investors from Indonesia, China, and across Asean to examine the future of collaboration in an era of accelerating change. The conference will address the most pressing themes shaping Southeast Asia's future, from strategic equilibrium in the US-China rivalry to the evolution of the China+1 supply chain model, capital access, and the rapid expansion of the digital economy. Sessions will spotlight high-level dialogue on economic integration, sustainable investment, cutting-edge technologies, responsible mining, and the green transition – including the rise of EV industries and advanced digital finance. 7:00 p.m. CST Feb. 9 – 3:00 a.m. CST Feb. 10. Virtual fees vary: \$0 - \$85. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.chinaconference.asia/home>.

Feb. 9 - 10 **BUSINESS MISSION TO AZERBAIJAN.** The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Commerce, will lead its first-ever bilateral Business Mission to Azerbaijan. The delegation will spend two full days in Baku, meeting with Azerbaijani government and business leaders across various ministries and sectors. Chamber Members - \$2,500; Non-members - \$5,000. For information & registration, please see: <https://uschamberofcommerce.swoogo.com/baku-mission-2026>.

Feb. 9 **DUTIES AND TAXES: THE FULL LANDED COST.** Webinar, sponsored by the World Trade Research Institute, will show you how to figure out the HS Codes for your products and will provide resources for calculating the duties, taxes, and other fees that might apply to your international shipment. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CST. Fee: \$89. For information & registration, please see: <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/6hf9h5>.

Feb. 10 **EXPORT COMPLIANCE ESSENTIALS 2: EXPORT COMPLIANCE MASTERCLASS.** Webinar, sponsored by Star USA, will explore recent regulatory updates, risk management strategies, and how compliance can empower your business as you expand into new markets. Learn practical approaches to stay resilient and compliant while pursuing growth. 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: <https://starusa.org/events/export-compliance-essentials-2-export-compliance-masterclass/>.

Feb. 11 **COAL AND MINING EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES INITIATIVE OVERVIEW.** Webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Commercial Service, will highlight export opportunities in the global coal and mining sector and introduce Coal and Mining Connect, an exclusive platform designed to link U.S. suppliers with international buyers and partners. It will also provide actionable insights into global coal market trends, technology and equipment demand, and regulatory developments shaping procurement worldwide. Learn how U.S. companies can leverage the Coal and Mining Connect Directory to showcase capabilities, connect with qualified buyers, and access trade leads. We'll also spotlight priority markets and upcoming trade show opportunities to help you position your business for success. 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: <https://events.gcc.teams.microsoft.com/event/909fd23a-342c-4b85-b444-23d1c1b4a85f@a1d183f2-6c7b-4d9a-b994-5f2f31b3f780>.

Feb. 11 **EXPORTING ADVANCED MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS TO BRAZIL: CUSTOMS PROCEDURES & STRATEGIES.** Webinar, sponsored by the U.S. Commercial Service, will discuss: *The fundamentals of Brazilian Customs; Receive guidance on export documentation; Save time and money by learning tips to avoid common and expensive mistakes; Understand how duties and taxes are calculated and get a better idea on how much your product could cost to buyers in Brazil; Learn about exceptions for certain types of machinery; Market opportunities, resources and tools.* 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: <https://events.trade.gov/en/TradeGov/ExportingAdvancedManufacturingProductstoBrazil-988/>.

Feb. 12 **GOING GLOBAL: INTERNATIONAL TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES.** Webinar, sponsored by Plante Moran, will break down key considerations for global expansion, including payroll requirements, U.S. income tax disclosure obligations, and more. This session will provide a high-level roadmap to help you navigate tax and compliance challenges of building an international workforce. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: https://event.on24.com/wcc/r/5174829/363B40A924B0154F6954D18A858211DC?partnerref=EMAIL&mkt_tok=OTQ2LNUUWS02MDEAAAGe0TdkChf5bJ0i4wKqp-D99vsgwBjJq17Uyv2UkfgVK3antVJZtfPJ0TRWaUppDLIfk1HJcL8-ICrOBFbOmH7dxjmfZC0NV5NcF20t7cnwnZvdc.

Feb. 13 **ANNUAL CHINESE NEW YEAR'S LUNCHEON.** Year of the Horse program sponsored by the Central Asian Productivity Research Center. Presentation by The Honorable Amb. **Wang Boadong**, People's Republic of China. 11:30 a.m., Evergreen Restaurant, 1411 South Wentworth Avenue, Chicago. CAPRC, HKBAM & ITA/GC Members - \$35; Non-members - \$45. For information & registration, please see: hlepinske.caprc@gmail.com.

Feb. 17 **UNDERSTANDING AD/CV DUTY CASES: FROM PETITION TO DUTY ASSESSMENT.** Webinar, sponsored by Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, will focus on what happens after a petition is filed and how businesses can better respond and prepare for potential impacts on imports. 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. CST. Fee: \$250. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.strtrade.com/training/events/upcoming-webinars/understanding-ad-cv-duty-cases-from-petition-to-duty-assessment>.

Feb. 18 **BUDGET-SMART TRANSLATION FOR GLOBAL BUSINESS.** Luncheon program sponsored by the **International Trade Association of Greater Chicago**. Presentation by **Peter Argondizzo**, CEO, Argo Translation, who will examine why translation is no longer a “nice to have,” but a strategic advantage for any company operating on the global stage. He'll look at how language can open doors to new markets, strengthen customer trust, and reduce operational risk. He'll also highlight practical, budget-friendly approaches that help teams stretch their resources without sacrificing quality. From using AI-assisted workflows to building long-term assets like translation memory and glossaries, attendees will leave with actionable steps to reduce costs today and improve efficiency tomorrow. 11:45 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Carlucci Rosemont, 6111 North River Road, Rosemont, IL. ITA/GC Members & their guests - \$50; Non-members - \$75. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/budget-smart-translation-for-global-business-tickets-1981880595211>.

Feb. 18 **IMPORTING DUTY-FREE SAMPLES OF TEXTILES, APPAREL, BAGS AND FOOTWEAR.** Webinar, sponsored by Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, will outline requirements for duty-free treatment and how companies can comply. Key topics: *Salesman samples; Prototypes; Temporary importation under bond; Carnet; Value of samples; Quantities; Invoice and entry requirements; Post-importation disposition of samples.* 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. CST. Fee: \$250. For information & registration, please see: [https://www.strtrade.com/training/events/upcoming-webinars/importing-duty-free-samples-of-textiles-apparel-bags-and-footwear-\(1\).](https://www.strtrade.com/training/events/upcoming-webinars/importing-duty-free-samples-of-textiles-apparel-bags-and-footwear-(1).)

Feb. 19 **2026 EXPORT COMPLIANCE UPDATES.** Breakfast workshop, sponsored by the Midwest International Trade Association, is an invaluable opportunity to immerse yourself in the latest information and updates that are crucial for navigating the complexities of international trade. 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., Tiburon Banquet Facility, 10302 South 168th Street, Omaha, NE. MITA Members - \$50; Non-members - \$75. For information & registration, please see: <https://mitaonline.org/events/2026-export-compliance-updates/>.

Feb. 19 **TAPPING INTO TRADE-PART 2: TRADE LOGISTICS.** Hybrid event sponsored by the International Trade Council of Greater Kansas City. The core of the program features an overview of the tools needed to get your products where they need to be: *What is a freight forwarder and how can they help; What are Incoterms, why do they matter, and how do I figure out the correct one(s)?; What are some common shipping roadblocks, and how do you navigate them effectively.* 10:00 a.m. CST. Hallmark, (Room 8B-M3-43-E Connections A) 2501 MaGee Street, Kansas City, MO. ITC Members – No fee; Non-members - \$15. For information & registration, please see: <https://itcgkc.org/event-6442738.>

Feb. 21 - 24 **GEAPS EXCHANGE.** This is a yearly event for the grain industry that brings together professionals to learn, network, and share ideas. The event is hosted by the Grain Elevator and Processing Society (GEAPS). The U.S. Commercial Service will be available to assist U.S. exporters. Kansas City Convention Center, Kansas City, Missouri. Fees: vary. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.geaps.com/exchange/>.

Feb. 23 - 24 **2026 WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONFERENCE.** Hybrid event, sponsored by the Washington International Trade Association, brings together leaders in international trade from across the U.S. and around the world to explore the trade landscape and look toward the future of trade. WITA Members in- person - \$200; virtual - \$150. Non-members in person - \$300; Non-members virtual – 250. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.wita.org/events/2026-witc-february/>.

Feb. 24 **COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH JAPANESE.** Virtual seminar, sponsored by Japan Intercultural Consulting, is focused on: Indirect communication; Ambiguous and context-dependent messaging; English as a non-native language. This in-depth seminar offers practical strategies for strengthening working relationships and achieving better results with Japanese colleagues, subordinates, customers, and supervisors. By the end of the seminar, participants will be better equipped to: Interpret indirect or ambiguous messages more accurately; Communicate clearly and respectfully across language and cultural gaps; Reduce misunderstandings while preserving relationships; Increase confidence and effectiveness in day-to-day interactions with Japanese counterparts. 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. CST. Fee: \$195. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/communicating-effectively-with-japanese-tickets-1979996243063?aff=odddtcreator.>

Feb. 25 **DOING BUSINESS IN SOUTH KOREA.** Webinar, sponsored by the Arkansas District Export Council and Arkansas Manufacturing Solutions, will show you how to navigate regulations, understand Korean business culture, and build successful partnerships. Ideal for companies and professionals exploring trade, investment, or expansion opportunities in South Korea. 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. CST. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/doing-business-in-south-korea-tickets-1979743171118?aff=odddtcreator.>

Mar. 2 - *JAPAN UAS AND C-UAS DEFENSE INDUSTRY PROGRAM 2026*. The U.S. Department of Commerce is proud to present the Japan UAS and C-UAS Defense Industry Program 2026 in Tokyo. This program is curated for U.S. Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and counter-UAS manufacturers exporting their products for defense use. U.S. participants can expect: Curated briefings, policy discussions, and roundtable sessions hosted by the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo; In-depth market overview of Japan's defense policy and industry priorities from U.S. Embassy personnel; Direct insight into the Japanese defense market, including key opportunities and challenges; Invitation-only U.S. Embassy reception; Engagement with senior procurement officials; On-site U.S. Embassy support throughout the program, providing market intelligence and logistics assistance. Fee: \$1,850++. For information & registration please see: <https://events.trade.gov/en/TradeGov/JapanUASandC-UASDefenseIndustryDayConference-9884-/>.

Mar. 10 *WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH JAPANESE*. Virtual seminar, sponsored by Japan Intercultural Consulting, is designed to offer answer to the many questions non-Japanese may have (e.g., "Why do Japanese take so long to make decisions?"; "Why don't Japanese give clear instructions?"). The seminar will also feature explanations of proper Japanese etiquette for meals and social activities. 11:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. CDT. Fee: \$325. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/working-effectively-with-japanese-online-seminar-tickets-1788184350529?aff=erelpanelorg>.

Mar. 14 *THE U.S. AND C5+1*. Breakfast discussion sponsored by the Central Asian Productivity Research Center Wisconsin Team. 8:30 a.m., Jimmy's Restaurant, 104 Leffler Street, Dodgeville, WI. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please contact: hlepinske.caprc@gmail.com.

Mar. 16 - 20 *SOUTHERN CONE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES TRADE MISSION TO CHILE, ARGENTINA, AND URUGUAY*. As part of the Initiative for Improving Advanced Competitiveness through Trade (IMPACT), the U.S. Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration (ITA) is organizing an Energy Technologies Trade Mission to the Southern Cone region. This mission will introduce U.S. companies to the dynamic Southern Cone region, whose governments are investing heavily in energy technologies to diversify and develop their economies. Participating U.S. companies will gain market insight on how to increase their exports to the region, visit project sites, and engage with pre-screened buyers, agents, distributors, project developers and potential business partners. The mission will include meetings and networking receptions with chambers of commerce, business groups, and national and regional government officials that can address questions on procurements, projects, policies, regulations, tariff rates, and incentives. For information & an application, please see: <https://events.trade.gov/TradeGov/SouthernConeEnergyTechTradeMission/>.

Mar. 17 *NAVIGATING THE WAVES OF TUMULTUOUS TRADE COMPLIANCE*. Luncheon program sponsored by the Madison International Trade Association. MITA's annual trade compliance event features experienced trade compliance experts who will cover the latest in policy updates and share how companies are taking a proactive approach to minimizing disruptions to supply chains and their businesses. Speakers: **Chris Young**, Principal, KPMG US; **Mollie Sitkowski**, Trade Compliance Partner, Faegre Drinker; **Poonam Arora**, Director of Global Trade Compliance and Government Contracts, Arnold Magnetic Technologies. 11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Fluno Center, 601 University Avenue, Madison, WI. MITA Members - \$50 (by March 10; \$60 thereafter); Non-members - \$75 (by March 10; \$85 thereafter). For information & registration, please see: <https://events.mitatrade.org/events/Details/navigating-the-waves-of-tumultuous-trade-compliance-1618819?sourceType=Website>.

Mar. 26 *CRACK THE CODE: HS CLASSIFICATIONS, SMART STRATEGIES & DUTY DRAWBACK*. Breakfast workshop sponsored by the Midwest International Trade Association. 8:30 – 11:30 a.m., Tiburon Banquet Facility, 10302 South 168th Street, Omaha, NE. MITA Members - \$50; Non-members \$75. For information & registration, please see: <https://mitaonline.org/events/crack-the-code-hs-classifications-smart-strategies-duty-drawback/>.

Mar. 31 **WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH JAPANESE.** Virtual seminar, sponsored by Japan Intercultural Consulting, is designed to offer answer to the many questions non-Japanese may have (e.g., “Why do Japanese take so long to make decisions?”; “Why don’t Japanese give clear instructions?”). The seminar will also feature explanations of proper Japanese etiquette for meals and social activities. 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. CDT. Fee: \$325. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/working-effectively-with-japanese-online-seminar-tickets-1789694126309?aff=erelpanelorg>.

Apr. 11 **THE CHINESE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE.** Breakfast discussion sponsored by the Central Asian Productivity Research Center Wisconsin Team. 8:30 a.m., Jimmy’s Restaurant, 104 Leffler Street, Dodgeville, WI. No fee; advance registration required. For information & registration, please contact: hlepinske.caprc@gmail.com.

Apr. 19 - 29 **SOUTHEAST ASIA MARITIME TRADE MISSION TO SINGAPORE AND INDONESIA.** TMA BlueTech, in collaboration with the International Trade Administration of the United States Department of Commerce, invites U.S. BlueTech companies to participate in the 2026 U.S. Maritime Technology Export Initiative. This federally supported program reduces the financial burden of international expansion and provides direct access to two of the most commercially active maritime markets in Southeast Asia. Participation in this delegation offers a rare opportunity to accelerate export growth, build long term partnerships, and engage directly with high level decision makers in Singapore and Indonesia. This mission builds on the strong results of last year’s Singapore delegation and expands into one of the world’s most dynamic emerging maritime markets. Up to eight U.S. companies will be accepted on a rolling basis. For information & an application, please see: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/66ad63b7e4f2fd7ec698e46e/t/6941fe31a608bb7418b6dace/1765932593234/2026+Trade+Mission+%28Singapore-Indonesia%29+E-Brochure.pdf>.

Apr. 29 - May 1 **EXHIBIT WITH THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AT SIAL CANADA 2026.** The Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, Office of Trade & Investment, invites you to exhibit in the Illinois Pavilion at the SIAL Canada 2026 trade show in Montreal. Covering every aspect of the Canadian food & beverage industry, SIAL Canada provides the perfect platform for Illinois exporters servicing institutional foodservice, restaurants, and grocery stores. Illinois companies who qualify for this mission will receive: Exhibit space; Matchmaking assistance; 25 - 75% partial reimbursement of lodging and airfare costs in accordance with guidelines; Briefing material; Pre-show promotion; Assistance with travel logistics. Fee: \$1,000. For information & an application, please contact: Chris.Sedgwick@Illinois.gov.

May 5 **COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH JAPANESE.** Virtual seminar, sponsored by Japan Intercultural Consulting, is focused on: Indirect communication; Ambiguous and context-dependent messaging; English as a non-native language. This in-depth seminar offers practical strategies for strengthening working relationships and achieving better results with Japanese colleagues, subordinates, customers, and supervisors. By the end of the seminar, participants will be better equipped to: Interpret indirect or ambiguous messages more accurately; Communicate clearly and respectfully across language and cultural gaps; Reduce misunderstandings while preserving relationships; Increase confidence and effectiveness in day-to-day interactions with Japanese counterparts. 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. CDT. Fee: \$195. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/communicating-effectively-with-japanese-tickets-1980000899992?aff=odddtcreator>.

Jun. 9 **WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH JAPANESE.** Virtual seminar, sponsored by Japan Intercultural Consulting, is designed to offer answer to the many questions non-Japanese may have (e.g., “Why do Japanese take so long to make decisions?”; “Why don’t Japanese give clear instructions?”). The seminar will also feature explanations of proper Japanese etiquette for meals and social activities. 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. CDT. Fee: \$325. For information & registration, please see: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/working-effectively-with-japanese-online-seminar-tickets-1790097432609?aff=erelpanelorg>.

Jul. 20 - EXHIBIT WITH THE STATE OF ILLINOIS AT THE FARNBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW.

24 The Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, Office of Trade & Investment, invites you to exhibit in the Illinois booth at the Farnborough Airshow. The 2026 edition will spotlight five global industry themes: Global Security; Advanced Technology & AI; Supply Chain; Sustainability; and Future Workforce. Illinois companies who qualify for this Group Trade Mission will receive, in accordance with ISTEP program eligibility guidelines: Shared booth space in a high-visibility location; Business and government matchmaking; In-country briefing and networking; Pre-show market briefings and on-site support; Ground transportation to and from the fairgrounds; Partial reimbursement of travel costs for lodging and airfare between 25 and 75%. Fee: \$1,500. For information & an application, please contact: Riccardo.Navon@Illinois.gov.

About the ITA/GC

Founded in December 1977, **The International Trade Association of Greater Chicago (ITA/GC)** was incorporated in January 1979 as an Illinois not-for-profit, voluntary business association dedicated to promoting international commerce in all its forms by providing a forum for the exchange of practical information and insight within the international business community. The ITA/GC's focus is on practicality: on building knowledge and enabling relationships that help people do international business. While our scope of interest is diverse – all aspects of trading and commercial activity across all geographies and all industries – our work is simple: **to help others gain understanding that is personal, current and actionable.**

Annual membership dues are: Individual - \$150; Consular/Diplomatic - \$75 (up to 3 members); Academic/Faculty - \$200 (up to 8 designated faculty members); Student from a participating academic institution - \$25; Regular student - \$50; Associate/Non-resident (more than 150 miles from O'Hare International Airport) - \$50; Retired/Job Transition - \$50; Corporate (up to 8 designated members) - \$300. For a Membership Application, please call 773/725-1106; e-mail: info@itac.org; or visit: www.itac.org.

Follow the International Trade Association of Greater Chicago on LinkedIn:



About Barnes Richardson

Barnes Richardson (<http://www.barnesrichardson.com>) has been focused on international trade regulation and customs law since 1919. Our practice is global and includes matters originating both within and outside of the United States. We are a proud member of Meritas, an international group of law firms providing local, reliable, and efficient legal representation all over the world. We have provided customs or trade advice to over one-third of the manufacturers in the Fortune 100.

About KSM

KSM (Katz, Sapper & Miller) is one of the top 50 largest independent advisory, tax, and audit firms in the United States. Through our deep experience across multiple disciplines and industries, we provide clients with the inspiration, insight, and technical expertise they need to achieve great things. KSM's international team provides tax planning and consulting services to help businesses and individuals navigate all aspects of cross-border activity. Headquartered in Indianapolis, we operate multiple offices and serve an impressive roster of clients who count on us to be their trusted advisors. Learn more at ksmcpa.com.