

## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Berlin (30 May – 1 June 2016)*

#### *International Trade Council*

#### **BIR supports free trade over trade “isolationism”**

**Brussels, 6 June 2016**

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Container security and an update on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership were the headline topics of the first plenary meeting of the BIR International Trade Council (ITC) to take place under the chairmanship of Michael Lion of China-based Everwell Resources Ltd.

At the gathering in Berlin on May 30, Dale Didion of US-based AKUA Secure Logistics provided details of his company's security devices for containers which transmit an alert if tampered with or if temperature/humidity variations occur. GSM or satellite communication enable real-time data to be sent securely to a client's phone.

According to Mr Didion, research suggested that US cargo theft amounted to anything between US\$ 10bn and US\$ 50bn on an annual basis, and so it was important to monitor containers as closely as latest technology allowed. He gave an example of how the company's devices had helped a business outside the recycling industry to pinpoint some “unexpected” stopping points for its containers when in transit.

It was agreed at the Berlin meeting that BIR would look to explore more fully the possibilities offered by this interesting technology.

Fellow guest speaker Dr Christian Bluth of Bertelsmann Stiftung in Germany explained to ITC delegates that the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, or TTIP, had been envisioned as a link between the world's two largest trading groups that would lower not

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**BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS**

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only tariffs but also non-tariff barriers, resulting in a substantial reduction in trade costs across a number of sectors - including recycling.

However, Dr Bluth also conceded that the TTIP negotiations were currently “deadlocked”. Public opinion surrounding the partnership had become “increasingly sceptical” in some countries, notably Germany where a widespread concern was that regulatory co-operation would lead to lower standards. In the USA, meanwhile, a major fear was loss of jobs despite the fact that much of the prosperity in the world had emanated from trade, according to the speaker.

If significant progress were not made during the next round of negotiations in July this year, Dr Bluth believed the most likely outcome would be a “TTIP Light” solution that offered significantly fewer benefits than originally envisaged.

Mr Lion reiterated at the meeting in Berlin that the ITC’s main role was to liaise with the various forms of government on trading issues affecting the recycling industry. BIR as a whole remained committed to free trade and so evident pressures for trade “isolationism” represented “a real concern”, he said.

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