





# REGIONAL DOOR-KNOCK

*In mid-November, a strongly representative delegation from the AmChams of Hungary, Romania and Slovakia had a unique opportunity to experience Washington D.C., when they called on representatives of a host of U. S. and foreign government and business related institutions.*

A limited number of AmCham member companies had an opportunity to join this special delegation as AmCham Hungary, AmCham Slovakia and AmCham Romania jointly organized the first **Regional Door Knock Trip to Washington D.C.**

Utilized by numerous AmChams around the world and recognized as an effective and respected lobbying vehicle, this Door Knock Trip was aimed at strengthening business relationships between the U.S. and Central and Eastern Europe and promoting bi-lateral trade and mutual understanding.

The itinerary for the trip included meetings with senior level representatives from diplomatic missions from Hungary, Slovakia and Romania in Washington D.C.; the U.S. State Department; the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; the Homeland Security Office; the National Security Council; and the US Commerce Department, among others.



*The Regional AmCham Delegation in front of the Romanian Embassy in Washington, D.C.*

As a result of the regional nature of the trip, participants were able to meet political and business leaders from all the countries being represented during the lobbying mission. For most of the attendees, it was a first time visit to Washington, D.C.

It was noted by some of those receiving the delegation that this historic mission was extremely important for the region as, working together, individual countries in Central and Eastern Europe can make a greater impact in Washington.



*CEE AmChams Delegation at the U.S. State Department*

**Please find below some highlights of the 2005 Regional Door-Knock visit to Washington.**

On Monday, November 14, the members of the regional delegation started their day with the **U.S. Chamber of Commerce**, located very near the White House. Here, the AmCham delegation received a briefing from Mr. Scevole de Cazotte, the Senior Policy Director for European Affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and Ms. Edyta K. Malinowski, Program Coordinator of the Office of Europe & Eurasia, International Division, as they addressed corporate governance, advocacy issues, international trade and legal reform. In his presentation, as a matter of interest to those in the room, Mr. de Cazotte pointed out that 75% the capital invested in the U.S. comes from Europe. Of particular interest also was the role of lobbyists in Washington, D.C., and the Chamber's activities concerning innovation and competition.

Also on November 14, a meeting with the **U.S. Trade Representative**. This very interesting and productive meeting, hosted by the Embassy of Romania, took place with Laurie Molnar, U.S. Trade Representative's Director for European and Mediterranean Issues, and Lisa Errion, Director for Central and Eastern Europe.

Topics addressed at this meeting were trade-related intellectual property protection issues, negotiations affecting U.S. import policies, the Generalized the System of Preferences (GSP) and Section 301 complaints against



*AmCham Romania President Roberto Musneci speaking with Ms. Laurie Molnar, Director for European and Mediterranean Issues, and Ms. Lisa Errion, Director for Central and Eastern Europe, U.S. Trade Representative*

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foreign unfair trade practices; trade, commodity, and direct investment matters managed by international institutions; and bilateral, regional and multilateral trade and investment issues.

The second day of the Door-Knock began with a meeting at the **U.S. Department of State**. The Door Knock mission had the pleasure of meeting up with an impressive representation of the Department of State, including Janet Garvey, Director for the North Central Europe Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs; David Kostelancik, Deputy Director; and Country Desk Officers: Bill Silkworth, Valerie Lynn, and Eric Luftman. Also in attendance was Bolton Walters, Senior Advisor for Commercial and Business Affairs.



*Reception hosted by the Embassy of Romania (from left to right): Roberto Musneci (AmCham Romania), Andreea Pelivan (Capital & Alliance Insurance Brokerage), Anca Harasim (AmCham Romania), Mihai Mares (Stefanica, Dutu & Partners), Romanian Ambassador Sorin Ducaru, U.S. Ambassador Nicholas Taubman, Jay Burgess (U.S. Department of Commerce)*

General areas addressed by the group were challenges of conducting business in international markets, economic and trade policy, national security, NATO enlargement, coordination with the European Union, and strategic partnership with EU. In addition, IPR issues and Section 301 complaints were addressed. Representatives of each AmCham also briefed the State Department representatives on issues relevant to their respective economies.

Next on the agenda was the **U.S. Senate Committee for Foreign Relations**. The President of AmCham Romania, Roberto Musneci; the Executive Director of AmCham Romania, Anca Harasim; the Executive Director of AmCham Hungary, Peter Fath; and the Executive Director of AmCham Slovakia, Jake Slegers, had the opportunity to meet with Kenneth A. Myers, III, Senior Staff for the Senate Committee for Foreign Relations for a frank discussion on U.S. foreign policy, EU relations, and CEE relations. Mr. Myers also highlighted the possibility of House of

Representative and Senate Committee staffs visiting Central Europe next year and the importance of partnering with our respective embassies.

In the meantime, the rest of the AmCham delegation met with April Dubois, Director for International Business Development at the Greater Washington Board of Trade. This particular meeting informed attendees about possibilities of expanding business to international markets, building partnerships between businesses, and promoting sound fiscal policies and regional development programs.

On Tuesday, November 15, after lunch, next on the agenda was the **U.S. Department of Commerce**. Again an impressive delegation of representatives of the Department of Commerce was on hand to meet with the Central European Door Knock group. Frank Lavin, new Undersecretary of Commerce for International Affairs; Eric Stewart, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Europe; Jay Burgess, Director for European Country Affairs; and Jonathan Kimball, Director for Central and Southeast Europe; Michael Rogers, Slovakia Desk Officer; Silvia Savich, Hungary Desk Officer; and Kristin Nadji, IA Analyst and Romanian Desk Officer, as of November 28, facilitated an interactive exchange of issues and ideas. The general business environment in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as globalization, export and import issues, market access, advocacy issues and commercial policy were all addressed.

In addition, Undersecretary of Commerce for International Affairs Lavin encouraged the group to proactively seek interaction with the European headquarters of American companies not presently operating in Central Europe to encourage them to seriously consider the advantages of investing in the region.

Some of the members of the delegation were treated to an unforgettable, informative, and very personal tour of the U. S. Capitol building given by U.S. Congressman John Mica. That evening Romania's Ambassador hosted a reception at his residence for the entire group and many invited guests.

## **Anca Harasim, Executive Director AmCham Romania:**

"This premiere Regional Door-Knock was extremely important because it offered all those involved a first-hand briefing on transatlantic relations and gave participants the opportunity to learn directly of the priorities in the US - CEE exchanges. At the same time, the trip served as a brainstorming session for ways to attract investors from US - with a special focus on SMEs - in the region and for collaboration opportunities in the Black Sea area. Most importantly, we have achieved our main objective: to target and get in direct contact with top officials and representatives of the US business environment and lobby for the tremendous potential of the CEE region".

Wednesday morning began with the **Center for Strategic International Studies (CSIS)** which provides strategic insights and practical policy solutions to decision makers committed to advancing global security and prosperity. This meeting featured George Handy, the Director of European Initiatives and Georgeta Pourcheot, the Senior Analyst for European Affairs, with a strong exchange of ideas and experience on the respective business environments present in Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia.