



The Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP
Prime Minister, UK Government
Host, The G20 summit

Business leadership for enhancing an open, inclusive and rules-based multilateral trading regime and the rejection of protectionism

Prime Minister

We are writing to you as business executives, business school professors and business consultants a very strong message to convey to the heads of government of the G20 meeting that you have convened on 2 April in London.

At this extremely perilous juncture of the global economy, we wish to express our total commitment to the maintenance and indeed improvement of the open global market economy and the rules-based multilateral trading system. We especially wish to stress the importance of increasing and improving the integration of developing countries in the global trade regime. Protectionism must not prevail.

We ask the G20 leaders to think back and to think forward. As the current state of the world economy is the worst since the 1930s, they should think back to the cataclysmic effects – especially in respect to employment – that the protectionist surge then inflicted.

We ask them to think forward. Over the course of the next decade there will be hundreds of millions of young people coming on to the labour markets in the developing world. This is perhaps the greatest challenge the world faces in the immediate future. Trade is by no means a guarantee that there will be sufficient growth for the required number of jobs to be created; but we can be sure that if trade continues to fall at the rate it is at present and if greater barriers are erected, the outlook becomes extremely bleak and millions, perhaps billions, will suffer.

The Declaration of the earlier G20 summit contained the right words on trade, especially paragraph 13 in the sub-section entitled “Commitment to an open global economy”. Regrettably the words have not been translated into action. We believe it is imperative for the sake of the global economy and for the credibility of the G20 itself, that the Summit you will be chairing does ensure that action ensues.

We are petitioning the G20 to hear a resounding rejection of protectionism and an unambiguous commitment to a rules-based open global market economy to enhance the welfare of mankind for current and for future generations. To that end specific measures and deadlines for implementation, should be identified.

We thank you in advance for presenting this petition to the participants at the G20 summit you will be chairing and we wish the summit the success it must achieve to restore confidence,

Yours faithfully