

**Introductory remarks by Mr CHAU Tak Hay**  
**Secretary for Commerce and Industry**  
**In the Keynote Address by Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky**  
**at the 14th General Meeting of PECC**  
**28 November 2001**

Distinguished guests, leaders and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honour to introduce our speaker, Ambassador Charlene Barshefsky.

Ambassador Barshefsky was the chief trade negotiator and principal trade policy maker for the United States from 1996 to 2001. As the United States Trade Representative and a member of the Cabinet of President Clinton, Ambassador Barshefsky was at centre stage in the opening of markets around the world and, as the architect of US trade policy, a central figure for international business.

Best known for negotiating the United States' historic market opening agreement with China on her entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Ambassador Barshefsky pursued an aggressive agenda to open foreign markets across the globe, negotiating numerous complex trade agreements with virtually every major market, from China, Japan and the European Union to the smallest states of Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. Ambassador Barshefsky was also the architect of the negotiations to create a hemispheric free trade zone, the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

The breadth of Ambassador Barshefsky's accomplishments has been widely recognised : Harvard Law School recently honoured her with its "Great Negotiator" award and she was the recipient of Yale Law School's Prieskel-Silverman Fellowship for extraordinary public service.

Prior to joining the US Administration, Ambassador Barshefsky was a well-known trade litigator. She has recently resumed her distinguished legal career and is now Senior International Partner at Wilmer, Cutler and Pickering.

I have known Charlene since 1993, when she first joined the Clinton Administration as Deputy United States Trade Representative. We have worked closely together in APEC, the WTO, and bilateral issues, until her return to private life early this year. Like many who have had the privilege of seeing her in action, I have always been an admirer of Charlene's great flair and brilliance as a negotiator and as her country's top trade representative. I am therefore very glad that she has come to Hong Kong to address us on a topic on which she is uniquely qualified to speak.