



U.S. - India Importers' Council

USIIC holds Delegation Reception for Hon. Governor Nikki Haley

US-India Importers' Council (USIIC) hosted a delegation reception in honor of Governor of South Carolina, Nikki Haley, on November 19, 2014, at the Mumbai Cricket Association Club, Mumbai.

In his welcome address, Dr. V. Rangaraj, Founder Chairman of USIIC said we are extremely honored, by the visit of the Governor and the large turnout of businessmen and corporate professionals, who he said are "instrumental in promoting Indo-US economic relations".

Dr. Rangaraj said that the USIIC is a private sector initiative under the purview of President Obama's National Export Initiative. He said that the body works closely with SMEs in the US and small importers in India, towards promoting exports of US goods and services to India. He said that USIIC helps US exporters engage with India in a manner consistent with the initiatives of the US Commerce Department.

Speaking about Prime Minister Modi's meeting with President Obama during his recent visit to the US, Consul General Thomas Vajda said that the two leaders were able to chart a new vision for a better future and expanded ties – one anchored in our shared values, principles, and in particular our shared commitment to expand trade and investment ties between our countries, societies and people".

"There are a lot of opportunities to expand co-operation from an economic and commercial perspective" Consul General Vajda opined. "There is already a strong backbone on which to build", he pointed out, stating that India has the fastest growing and largest FDI to the US. Consul General Vajda said that the Consulate is doing everything it can to facilitate trade. He said the US is confident it will remain the primary place to invest and do business in the world. He said that South Carolina is one of "the real success-stories" that has contributed to this.

Mr. Puneet Ahluwalia, Vice Chairman, USIIC, US Chapter, Washington DC, said the USIIC has chalked out sectors for active participation on both sides. He said that it creates a free-flow of conversation and exchange of ideas through various partnerships.

Among many flattering words, Mr. Ahluwalia introduced Governor Haley as "A proud daughter of Indian immigrants", and "CEO of South Carolina"! He enlightened those present about Governor Nikki Haley being known for her many key reforms, including cutting off waste, streamlining operations, economic development, job creation and educational reforms.

"It's a pleasure to be here in Mumbai", said Governor Haley, starting off her powerful speech. "It makes me incredibly proud to see the direction that India is moving in", she said. "We had the opportunity to see Prime Minister Modi in New York. Very few leaders can fill Madison Square Garden", she stated,

adding “The excitement and optimism of the Indian community in America is fantastic”. She said that the energy in India is equally amazing.

Governor Haley said that a few years ago, the economy of South Carolina was not doing well. She talked about how her state looked at its business environment, permits and regulatory rules, got into customer services, put business people on the boards, capped damages on law suits, and focused on ‘made in South Carolina’. “If you take care of your businesses, you take care of your economy, of education, of healthcare”, she advised.

Not only have we dropped the unemployment rate by 5 points, we now build planes with Boeing, we have the number ‘1’ BMW producing plant in the world, we are the number ‘1’ tyre-producing state in the country. “The list goes on”, she said proudly. “95% of South Carolina’s economy is small businesses”, Governor Haley stated. She said that if any company comes to South Carolina, they ask it to hire residents or use South Carolina businesses. “We have one of the best training programs in the country”, she said, adding “We don’t have businesses conform to our training programs, we conform our training to the businesses. We train develop skill-sets at our expense and hand them over to companies that come to South Carolina – the success rate of the people they hire for their companies is 92%”, she said. We make sure the loyalty in South Carolina is very strong. “The average time that a person works for a manufacturing company in South Carolina is 25 years”, Governor Haley stated.

Speaking about tourism, Governor Haley said her state has been deemed Number ‘1’ vacation spot in the country for the last four years, and, the number ‘2’ vacation spot in the world – Charleston, South Carolina.

“We are here in India because we see the opportunities. South Carolina has done the same things that India is going to do – We know that the path that you are on is a path that works. We also know that it’s a path that we want to be a part of”, Governor Haley said. “It’s personal for me to know that we will be recruiting companies from India. South Carolina is the third best state to do business in. It is the number ‘one’ best state when it comes to cost of doing business”. She said that the main focus was on quality and being successful.

A special appreciation was made to chief sponsor of the event Aditya Birla Group and ALLCARGO Logistics.