



APRIL 2025

BR INTERNATIONAL TRADE REPORT BLANKROME



ANTHONY RAPA

PARTNER

Note from the Editor

By Anthony Rapa

Welcome to this month's issue of *The BR International Trade Report*, Blank Rome's monthly digital newsletter highlighting international trade, sanctions, cross-border investment, geopolitical risk issues, trends, and laws impacting businesses domestically and abroad. We invite you to share this resource with your colleagues and visit Blank Rome's International Trade [webpage](#) for more information about our team.

Recent Developments

United States implements universal baseline tariffs while pausing reciprocal tariffs—except against China.

- On April 2, President Trump announced [reciprocal tariffs](#) on almost all imports into the United States, which his administration rolled out in two phases:
 - On April 5, imports from all countries became subject to a 10 percent baseline tariff.
 - On April 9, the tariff rate increased for imports from [56 countries and the European Union](#), countries with which the United States has determined it has the largest trade deficits. This included a 34% tariff on Chinese goods.
- Later, in response to China's retaliatory tariffs of 34% on U.S. goods (see below), President Trump levied an additional 50% in tariffs on Chinese goods which China then matched.
- On April 9, President Trump announced a 90-day pause on implementation of the second wave of reciprocal tariffs noted above, except with respect to import of Chinese goods, which saw a further increase in tariffs to 125%.
- Notably, certain products are excluded from the new tariff program, including items subject to Section 232 tariffs and articles that comply with United States-Mexico-Canada Act ("USMCA") preferential origin rules. See our [alert](#) for more details.

Global trading partners react to United States reciprocal tariffs.

In the aftermath of President Trump's reciprocal tariffs announcement, U.S. trading partners have taken differing approaches to President Trump's new tariffs.

- Some, like Israel, India, and Vietnam, reportedly have [contacted](#) the White House to negotiate a deal. When President Trump announced on Truth Social that he was postponing the tariffs, he [claimed](#) that more than 75 countries have reached out to negotiate.

- China, in stark contrast, announced [retaliatory tariffs](#) of 34 percent, expanded its export controls, and vowed to ["fight to the end."](#) In response, President Trump increased the U.S. tariff on Chinese goods. After a series of escalating moves, at press time, the U.S. tariff on Chinese goods stood at 145% (125% for reciprocal tariffs plus a 20% tariff related to the fentanyl crisis), while China is imposing a 125% retaliatory tariff on U.S. goods.
- Meanwhile, the European Union reportedly is [doing both](#): authorizing [retaliatory tariffs](#) on around €22 billion of imports of U.S. goods into Europe, while offering a "zero for zero" tariff deal for cars and other industrial products. In response to the Trump Administration's pause on reciprocal tariffs, the EU has paused its retaliatory measures.

China, Japan, and South Korea meet to discuss possible free trade agreement.

On March 30, the three countries held their first economic talks in years, agreeing to "closely cooperate for a comprehensive and high-level" dialogue on a free trade agreement to promote "regional and global trade." Chinese state media took things a step further, [claiming](#) that the countries had agreed to coordinate their response to U.S. tariffs, which South Korea described as "somewhat exaggerated" and which Japan denied.

White House releases public summary of the Report to the President on the America First Trade Policy.

On April 3, the White House publicized a [summary](#) of various U.S. government agencies' April 1 report to President Trump on the implementation of his "America First" trade policy, although the summary did not provide definitive details regarding the report's contents. The summary notes that the report examined a range of China-related trade actions, as well as "*simpler, stricter, and more effective*" export controls and possible expanded U.S. government review of outbound U.S. investment into China.

President Trump orders new CFIUS review of Nippon Steel's proposed acquisition of U.S. Steel.

On April 7, President Trump called for the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States ("CFIUS") to [conduct a de novo review](#) of the proposed acquisition of U.S. Steel by Japan's Nippon Steel. President Trump's directive comes after former President Joe Biden blocked the acquisition of U.S. Steel prior to his departure from the White House.

European Union considering joining Canada in World Trade Organization case against U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs. On March 12, Canada filed a [request for consultations](#) at the World Trade Organization (“WTO”), alleging that U.S. steel and aluminum tariffs are “inconsistent with the United States’ obligations under the [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994].” Reports [indicate](#) that the European Union may join Canada’s complaint as the economic “bloc has a ‘substantial trade interest’ in the issue.” The dispute complaint is largely symbolic in nature, as since 2019, the WTO’s appellate body has been [nonfunctioning](#).

Coalition government formed in Germany amid economic uncertainty. The German center-right Christian Democratic Union (“CDU”), led by Chancellor-in-waiting Friedrich Merz, and the center-left Social Democratic Party (“SPD”) reached an agreement to form a coalition government. The need for a centrist coalition was driven by uncertainty regarding American tariffs and the continuation of the Ukraine War, along with an impetus to keep the Alternative for Germany (“AfD”) party out of power. Merz has touted the agreement as evidence that Germany will be a reliable and capable force in Europe.

Democratic Republic of the Congo seeks critical minerals deal with the United States. On March 3, Representative Ronny Jackson (R-TX) met with Democratic Republic of the Congo (“DRC”) President Felix Tshisekedi in late March to discuss a [potential critical minerals deal](#) between the countries. The potential deal comes as the DRC seeks to secure funding to contain the [conflict](#) with the Rwandan-backed M23 rebels in its east. Massad Boulos, President Donald Trump’s senior advisor for Africa, [indicated](#) that the White House had reviewed a minerals agreement between the United States and the DRC and that President Trump and Boulos had “agreed on a path forward for its development.”

President Trump extends TikTok sale deadline. On April 4, President Donald Trump [announced](#) that he would pause the upcoming ban of TikTok, set for April 5 under a law that President Biden signed last year requiring divestiture of TikTok’s U.S. operations, for another seventy-five days. The extension comes after representatives of ByteDance, TikTok’s parent, [reportedly](#) told the White House that the Chinese government would not approve a sale of the company without negotiations over tariffs. President Trump has [suggested](#) that he may lower tariffs on U.S. imports of Chinese-origin items if Beijing approves the sale.

Impeached South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol removed from office. On April 4, South Korea’s Constitutional Court voted [unanimously](#) to remove Yoon Suk Yeol, the country’s impeached president, from office for his December 2024 martial law [declaration](#). South Korea will hold a snap presidential election on June 3, 2025.

For continuous, up-to-date information on the evolving administrative landscape, check out Blank Rome’s [Trump Administration Resource Hub](#). Explore previous BR International Trade Reports [here](#).

In Case You Missed It

Liberation Day: President Trump Unveils Global, Reciprocal Tariffs—What You Need to Know

Blank Rome partner [Joanne E. Osendarp](#), of counsel [Timothy J. Hruby](#), senior counsel [Alan G. Kashdan](#), and associates [Brenden S. Saslow](#), [Rachel D. Evans](#), and [Christopher A. Kimura](#) authored this alert assessing the recently announced global tariffs initiated by the Trump administration. [Read More >>](#)

The Association of Women in International Trade

Blank Rome's International Trade practice group recently became a sponsor of The Association of Women in International Trade (WIIT). The WIIT, based in Washington, DC, works to promote the professional development of women in international trade and business and to raise public awareness of the importance of international trade to economic development. [Read More >>](#)

Upcoming Events

April 17, 2025 9th Annual North American Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Conference

Blank Rome partners Susan L. Bickley and Ryan T. Purpura will serve as speakers at the University of Houston ("UH") Law Center's 9th Annual North American Environment, Energy & Natural Resources Conference, being held in Houston, Texas, on Thursday, April 17, 2025, from 12:45 to 5:30 p.m. with reception to follow. International Trade partner [Anthony Rapa](#) and of counsel [Timothy J. Hruby](#) will be in attendance. [Read More >>](#)

April 23, 2025 2025 Inter-Pacific Bar Association Annual Meeting and Conference

Blank Rome partner [Anthony Rapa](#), senior counsel [Alan G. Kashdan](#), and associate [Brendan S. Saslow](#) will be attending IPBA's 2025 Annual Meeting and Conference in Chicago, Illinois on April 23, 2025. [Read More >>](#)

April 29, 2025 Export Controls Amid Evolving Trump 2.0 Trade Dynamics: Policy Updates and Best Practices

Blank Rome partners [Anthony Rapa](#) and [Justin A. Chiarodo](#) will serve as speakers for the Association of Corporate Counsel National Capital Region ("ACC NCR") program, "Export Controls Amid Evolving Trump 2.0 Trade Dynamics: Policy Updates and Best Practices," taking place Tuesday, April 29, 2025, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. EDT, in McLean, Virginia, and via webcast. [Read More >>](#)

May 7, 2025 Connected Vehicles Rule: New Auto Industry Supply Chain Compliance Requirements Could Signal More ICTS Actions Under Trump's "America First" Policy

Blank Rome partner [Anthony Rapa](#) will serve as faculty for "Connected Vehicles Rule: New Auto Industry Supply Chain Compliance Requirements Could Signal More ICTS Actions Under Trump's "America First" Policy," a one-hour live online briefing being presented by Practising Law Institute ("PLI") on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. EDT. [Read More >>](#)

To learn more about other Recent Developments or Upcoming Events, click [here](#).

To read more about Blank Rome's International Trade practice, please visit our [website](#).