WTO TRADE POLICY REVIEW OF VIET NAM
Opening Statement by the U.S. Representative
November 4, 2026

Thank you, Chair. We warmly welcome Ambassador Mai Phan Dũng and all of Viet Nam's delegation. The United States recognizes the importance of Viet Nam on this twentieth anniversary of Viet Nam's accession to the WTO.

Viet Nam is a valued economic partner of the United States. Our bilateral trade relationship has deepened significantly since the signing of the United States – Viet Nam Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) in 2001 and since Viet Nam's accession to the WTO. In 2025, U.S. goods and services two-way trade with Viet Nam totaled an estimated $209.5 billion but, unfortunately, in that same year the U.S. goods trade deficit with Viet Nam was $178.3 billion, a 45 percent increase from 2024.

On October 26, 2025, the United States and Viet Nam announced a Joint Statement on a Framework for an Agreement on Reciprocal, Fair, and Balanced Trade to strengthen our bilateral economic relationship. We are working through these negotiations to address the large and unsustainable bilateral trade deficit, in order to achieve reciprocal trade. The United States urges Viet Nam to consider its domestic and global demand when crafting its trade and investment policies.

We also continue to encourage Viet Nam to comply with its WTO obligations and undertake economic reforms to construct a more market-oriented economy.

I would like to highlight here five areas of concerns and hopefully improvement, and will note that many of these issues have been discussed by others today. First, intellectual property. We are interested in hearing about Viet Nam's plans to strengthen intellectual property protection and enforcement. We have questions about what concrete steps Viet Nam is taking, including against online piracy and counterfeit goods, and how Viet Nam will measure and demonstrate progress in these areas.

Second, state-owned enterprises (SOEs). We are concerned that state-owned enterprises (SOEs) still dominate large swaths of the economy, including the banking sector, accounting for 29 percent of Viet Nam's GDP.[1] Moreover, during the WTO TPR period, the number of Viet Nam's SOEs have increased. We urge Viet Nam to improve its corporate governance over SOEs, and to address the competitive distortions of its SOEs in its economy.

Third, digital trade. We note Viet Nam has enacted a large number of laws and regulations on digital trade and digital transformation of the economy. While we appreciate Viet Nam's efforts to prioritize development of the digital economy, we remain concerned with the numerous proposed and overlapping measures, as well as the limited opportunity provided for stakeholder consultations on these new laws. Overly restrictive requirements, such as local data storage

[1] Source: 2026 WTO Secretariat Report on Viet Nam, Section 3.3.5.2, "State-owned enterprises, and privatization," paragraph 3.178.

requirements and restrictions on cross-border data flows, undermine Viet Nam's development objectives and access to new technologies.

Fourth, labor. We note Viet Nam's efforts to cooperate with the International Labor Organization to improve labor policies and implement commitments related to international labor standards. We encourage Viet Nam to undertake the necessary reforms in order to align with international labor standards. We would emphasize the importance for Viet Nam to take action to address regulatory arbitrage between trading partners.

Fifth, transparency and notifications. We note Viet Nam has yet to submit several notifications in the areas of anti-dumping, agriculture, import licensing, subsidies, quantitative restrictions, and state trading enterprises. Viet Nam also has outstanding notifications concerning agriculture, import licensing, and State trading enterprises. We look forward to Vietnam's notifications across these outstanding areas.

In addition, we appreciate Viet Nam's notifications to the WTO TBT Committee, but we remain concerned that a number of recent notifications have not provided the recommended 60-day period for public comments. The United States strongly urges Viet Nam to provide at least a 60-day comment period for all TBT notifications, as recommended by the WTO, to ensure transparency and allow ample time for stakeholders to effectively review proposed measures and identify potential trade concerns.

In closing, I want to emphasize that we very much appreciate the opportunity provided by this meeting to discuss Viet Nam's trade and investment policies. We look forward to Viet Nam's responses to our questions, and to working together to address outstanding issues and make our bilateral relationship more reciprocal. We also look forward to continued cooperation here at the WTO, as well as in ASEAN, APEC, and in other fora. Thank you.