

NOTE: Letter distributed by *****, *****, ***** on Friday October 7th 2005, during the casual/symbolic last BOD meeting before the arrival of the foreign guests/the start of the event activities – with the first set of events, scheduled for Monday, October 10th. Letter was distributed, targeting to convince the Board members of BBB Romania to cancel the October 11th launch.

Dear Board members,

We need your urgent attention with regards to the launch event.

As these element have been received very close to the launch date and can affect the launch itself as well as the image of BBB members, your response is urgently requested.

During recent discussions with CBBB President Steven Cole, we were informed that several issues arose with regards to next week's launch by DOC (US Department of Commerce). Following discussions with the US Embassy in Bucharest, DOC expressed concern with regards to the BBB Romania launch, mainly arising from unconfirmed memberships in BBB and unconfirmed participation by the US Embassy in the launch. The phrase "unethical conduct" was used by DOC.

After we inquired locally, the US Embassy expressed reservation vis-a-vis the BBB Romania project due to:

- AmCham's reluctant position of BBB's intentions (rather focused on business and financial interest).
- BBB's lack of transparency about funding and membership.

US Embassy did not confirm participation in the pannels of the launch event. After discussing with AmCham, the following elements were also mentioned:

- an "aggressive and pushy" attitude by the BBB membership drive.
- a lack of transparency and "truthfulness" about comittments and support by some members for BBB in the eyes of other (potential) members
- a clear focus towards "business and commercial" activities (much discussion on the membership fees)

AmCham declined participation in the launch event.

While these elements are not grounds for changing the initial plans (launch), they need to factored as they have raised concerns with regards to our future activities.

- After informing CBBB's leadership of this apparent lack of support from local US institutions for the launch (and possible fallout from this) and requesting a position for CBBB with regards to the "opportunity of launching under these conditions", CBBB asked that we - the founding members - take a decision with regards to launching as planned or having an in-house event (ie: meetings with BBB Romanian members, 1-2 interviews with the press, and meetings with representatives of authorities - including US Embassy for clarification).

Thanks for your understanding.
