

**News Statement
For May 4, 2007**

International Tiger Coalition

**Conservationists Welcome U.S. Commitment
To Oppose Reopening of China Tiger Trade**

Washington –Tiger conservationists welcome the announcement Thursday that the Bush Administration will work to oppose the lifting of China’s domestic ban on tiger trade.

The Administration told Congress yesterday that it would actively work to keep China’s 14-year-old ban in place at next month’s meeting of 171 nations at the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) came yesterday. Todd Willens, head of the U.S. CITES delegation, testified in front of the House Subcommittee on Natural Resources that the United States would work to persuade China not to lift the ban. The Chinese government is expected to try to make its case for resuming trade to the international community at CITES.

“It is critical that the United States and other important partners of China speak up for tigers at the CITES conference in June,” said Judy Mills of the International Tiger Coalition. “It is even more important that countries with wild tigers, such as India, let China know how important its trade ban is for survival of their tigers.”

Wealthy, well-connected investors behind “tiger farms” in China that breed tigers for profit are pressuring the Chinese government to lift its successful ban on the trade of tiger parts. These investors are stockpiling tiger carcasses in the hopes that they can overturn the ban and rekindle demand for tiger bone medicine and other products made from tigers, which have been in decline since the 1993 ban went into effect.

The International Tiger Coalition is an alliance of 30 organizations representing more than 100 organizations across the globe united under the common aim of stopping trade in tiger parts and products from all sources. Members include conservationists, animal welfare groups, traditional Chinese medicine organizations and zoos.

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