

Remarks by Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Karan Bhatia
Joint Press Briefing – Conclusion of KORUS FTA Negotiations
Seoul, Republic of Korea
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(as prepared for delivery)

- After ten months of negotiations culminating in the last eight very intense days, I'm very pleased to join Trade Minister Kim for today's announcement.
- The Free Trade Agreement we are announcing today is an historic accomplishment. By breaking down barriers to trade and investment, it will benefit the industrious and creative people of both our countries, create new economic opportunities, and strengthen a vital economic and strategic partnership that goes back half a century.
- Our economic relationship was strong before this agreement. With our \$78 billion bilateral trade relationship, Korea is United States' 7th largest trading partner, while we are Korea's third largest market. The KORUS FTA will mark the start of an important new chapter in that relationship.
- The agreement we have reached is a strong deal for both Korea and the United States.

- This is a strong deal for American farmers and ranchers who will gain substantial new access to Korea's large and prosperous market of 48 million people.
- It is a strong deal for American manufacturers and service providers who will enjoy new opportunities to be partners in Korea's remarkable economic transformation.
- And it is an agreement that will benefit American consumers who will gain new access to Korea's competitive goods and services.
- This agreement not only results in rapid reduction of both countries' tariff barriers but also contains unprecedented steps to address non-tariff barriers as well.
- It is an agreement for the 21st Century. It has state-of-the-art chapters on ecommerce, telecommunications, pharmaceuticals, financial services and competition. It enhances intellectual property rights, provides strong protections to investors, and opens government procurement to allow for the flow of new goods and services, while protecting labor and the environment. And it has an unprecedented package of provisions that will ensure that barriers to trade in automobiles are broken down.

- The negotiations that led to this FTA demonstrates that two countries with large, complex, and dynamic economies and a tradition of robust public involvement can work through challenges and craft a high-quality free trade agreement.
- We have worked hard to find ways address each other's sensitivities and priorities. Neither side obtained everything it sought. But I believe both sides can be confident that this agreement is in the best interests of the people of each country.
- For the United States, the agreement not only reinforced our strong commitment to the U.S.-Korean bilateral relationship, but also highlights strong U.S. commitment to active engagement and partnership throughout Asia.
- The dedicated professionals who have been part of this effort over the last year can be proud of their hard work. In this regard, let me acknowledge in particular the extraordinary work of Ambassador Jong Hoon Kim and Assistant US Trade Representative Wendy Cutler. I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous contributions of Wendy's deputy, Arrow Augerot.
- At a time when the cause of free trade faces many challenges, the this Free Trade Agreement is powerful testimony to a continuing commitment of two democracies to economic

growth through open markets. And it is testimony to the commitment of our two leaders – President Bush and President Roh – to make that vision a reality.