

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
(Minneapolis, Minnesota)

---

For Immediate Release

February 2, 2006

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The United States and the Republic of Korea have a strong alliance and are bound together by common values and a deep desire to expand freedom, peace, and prosperity throughout Asia and the world. Today, we seek to deepen the ties between our nations by negotiating a comprehensive U.S.-Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement.

A Free Trade Agreement with the Republic of Korea will provide important economic, political, and strategic benefits to both countries and build on America's engagement in Asia. The Republic of Korea is our seventh largest trading partner and seventh largest export market, and this Free Trade Agreement advances our commitment to opening markets and expanding opportunities for America's farmers, ranchers, workers, and businesses.

# # #