



Trade Facts

Office of the United States Trade Representative
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United States to Negotiate Participation in Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership

The United States will launch negotiations to join the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership, a comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) concluded by Brunei Darussalam, Chile, New Zealand and Singapore, as a vehicle for advancing Trans-Pacific wide economic integration.

- The United States and the Trans-Pacific partners will negotiate the terms of U.S. participation in Agreement, which entered into force in 2006.
- The TPP is a high-standard agreement that will facilitate trade and investment and promote U.S. interests on such issues as intellectual property rights, standards, transparency, labor and environment.

With international trade accounting for nearly two-thirds of U.S. economic growth from the second quarter of 2007 to the second quarter of 2008, this initiative will help ensure that our trade will continue to expand so that it can contribute to U.S. economic growth in the future. Strengthening our economic ties to the Trans-Pacific region is key to achieving this goal.

- The Asia-Pacific region accounts for nearly 60 percent of world GDP. The current rate of economic growth in the region is faster than the world average, and the International Monetary Fund forecasts that it will remain higher through at least 2013.
- The Asia-Pacific region accounts for almost half of all global trade and has large and growing markets totaling 41 percent of the world's population.

The TPP demonstrates the U.S. intention to continue to engage actively in the Asia-Pacific region. This high-standard agreement will potentially serve as a vehicle for advancing trade and investment liberalization and integration across the Trans-Pacific region and perhaps beyond. Ultimately, the objective is to expand the membership of the Agreement to other nations that share our vision of free and fair trade. We also can respond to the proliferation of preferential trade agreements in the Trans-Pacific region, which will increasingly hurt U.S. manufacturers, agricultural producers, services providers and workers.

- In 1980, there were 22 trade agreements in force involving a Trans-Pacific country or countries.
- Today, there are 152 agreements in force, 21 are completed and awaiting implementation, 72 are being negotiated and 81 are in an exploratory phase.

The Administration's decision to launch negotiations with the TPP countries follows a detailed exploratory process that began early this year. During that time, the United States has been participating in financial services and investment negotiations with the TPP countries. While the rest of the TPP Agreement entered into force in 2006, these two chapters remained to be negotiated.

- The United States has participated in three rounds of negotiations with the TPP countries so far and solid progress has been made on both chapters.



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While the United States was the first country to express interest in joining the TPP, other countries have recently expressed interest in potentially joining the Agreement.

- The Trans-Pacific partners and the United States will meet with potential partners over the next few months to explain further the provisions of the Agreement and to discuss their potential participation in the negotiations.
- We expect others to join when we meet for the first round of comprehensive negotiations tentatively set for early next year.

This initiative will support other priority trade initiatives.

- A successful conclusion of the Doha negotiations remains a top priority for the United States and the TPP countries; the Agreement's high standards will support a high level of ambition in the WTO Doha negotiations.
- It could provide a foundation for and build momentum towards a Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific.