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POTUS [President of the United States] Speech Files-G-7 Trip-Korea, Other Speeches:
Korea Speech to U.S. Embassy Staff

Staff Office-Individual:

Legislative Affairs-Rosner, Jeremy

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I am delighted to be here with you in Seoul today. Even in my short time in this fascinating country and this exciting city, I have been able to witness the contrasts of old and new and the combination of an ancient culture and a vibrant modern economy.

I know you work hard to keep America abreast of the rapid changes here. I suspect you've also put in some overtime to prepare for my visit. So I want to thank you. It can be difficult to have the President as your house guest, and I appreciate your efforts.

You have the good fortune to serve in one of the most vibrant and fascinating regions of the world. It is a region marked by dynamic economic growth, by the spread of democracy and by tremendous social change. And it is a region whose destiny is linked inextricably with that of America -- much to our mutual benefit, I believe.

Earlier this week, I met with the heads of state of the other major industrialized nations. As I talked with them, I thought about the nation you and I represent: bold, resilient, hungry, imaginative, energetic, diverse. I realized that America is the kind of nation that can thrive in the Pacific Rim environment -- an environment where cultures, ideas and economies are interacting at such a rapid pace. And with your help, America will thrive, in Asia and in other regions as well.

Your work here promotes economic growth at home. From wide-ranging trade and agricultural negotiations to individualized

efforts for American businesspeople in the Korean market, the U.S. Embassy has sown countless seeds of economic prosperity.

Of course, Korea is not only a robust trading partner, but also one of our most important allies in the ongoing, ever-vigilant effort to maintain regional security in Asia. And as Korea moves courageously to implement democratic reforms, your efforts take on added historical and strategic significance.

In Korea, freedom and democracy are not abstract concepts. They are real, and -- at the DMZ, where I visited -- they are never taken for granted. The willingness to defend them is, of course, the foundation of the U.S.-Korean relationship. Every day your work serves to strengthen that foundation.

While you are working to enhance our role in the world, the American people are doing the same, by revitalizing our country's competitiveness, getting our economic house in order, and updating our military forces for this new and challenging era. We all understand that America's ability to project influence abroad begins at home.

I know that it's not easy for many of you to be so far away from home -- to put up with regular upheavals of your family life so that you may represent your country overseas. I know, and I do not forget your commitment. When I make foreign policy decisions, I rely a great deal on you for accurate and timely insights. Your judgements inform mine. As diplomats and

emissaries, you are truly America's eyes, ears, and voice abroad.

And you also represent America's heart and soul. You embody our nation's virtues. So as you walk through the streets of Seoul -- this bustling city, this exemplar of the Olympic spirit -- remember the sense of shared values and common goals that link Korea and America. That team spirit will keep Korea safe and America strong.

Thanks again for your dedication and for all your hard work.

Draft Remarks to U.S. Embassy Staff

6/14

It is a real pleasure for me to have this chance to meet with you who are on the front line of the US presence in Korea. I know many of you have worked long and hard on behalf of my visit here. I am aware that even a short trip like mine requires an enormous amount of effort from the entire mission. I would like to thank you - on behalf of myself and my family - for your efforts to make this visit a success.

I understand the hardships embassy personnel and their families encounter when living and working overseas. Your efforts are recognized not only in Washington by your agencies but also by the American people as well. I am proud of each and every one of you and am confident that each of you contributes singularly to American interests in Korea.

Your work is helping promote free trade and economic growth here and at home. From wide-ranging trade and agricultural negotiations to individualized efforts for American businessmen in the Korean market, the seeds of economic prosperity you sow here will be reaped by all, Americans and Koreans alike, in the years and decades to come.

The contributions of our Embassy's consular and administrative staffs are the bedrock upon which our larger policy initiatives stand, and, thanks to you, the sometimes distant face of American foreign policy becomes a more visible and personal one. The embassy's reporting keeps us fully

informed of the complex issues which confront our nation today throughout this region of the world.

Our nation appreciates your efforts and depends on them to help us chart our path during this post-Cold War transition period. Here in Korea, our relationship is an important link in America's foreign, security, and economic relationships with the Pacific Rim. Your great efforts help ensure that our shared American goals of democracy, freedom, and economic opportunity are spread throughout this part of the world. Thank you very much and God bless America.