



From Enactment To Entry Into Force: Next Steps On The Trade Agreements

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President Barack Obama will sign legislation implementing U.S. trade agreements with Korea, Colombia, and Panama. These agreements will open markets for U.S. firms, increase trade and exports, and support additional jobs for American workers who produce Made-in-the-USA goods and services.

The length of time necessary to implement trade agreements varies, but the President is committed to bringing these agreements into force as soon as possible to reap their benefits at home. Here are next steps:

Action by our Trading Partners

Korea's National Assembly is now considering the U.S.-Korea trade agreement. The legislatures of Colombia and Panama have ratified their respective agreements.

Beyond ratification, what each partner country must do to come into compliance with the agreement depends on its specific laws and regulations. Before the agreement can enter into force, each country must be able to demonstrate that it is in compliance with those obligations that will take effect on day one.

Action Here at Home

The trade agreement implementing bills contain all changes to U.S. law necessary to bring the United States into compliance with the agreements. In addition to these changes in U.S. law, for each agreement the United States will issue a proclamation containing specific tariff revisions and product-specific rules, and make additional administrative and regulatory changes covering issues such as customs and procurement.

Cooperative Work with our Trading Partners

Immediately after President Obama signs the implementing legislation, the United States will schedule cooperative work with Korea, Colombia, and Panama on implementing the agreements. The United States will hold discussions with the partner countries to review both countries' laws and regulations, and ensure compliance with the obligations of the agreement that will take effect on the day the agreement enters into force. U.S. officials will also consult with Congress and with U.S. stakeholders.

Exchange of Diplomatic Notes

The provisions of the FTAs provide for entry into force through the exchange of formal diplomatic notes at a time agreeable to both countries. In the United States, the President must

first determine that the trading partner has come into compliance with obligations that will take effect when the agreement enters into force. This includes, in the case of Korea, the pertinent obligations of the 2011 exchange of letters on autos. In the case of Colombia, the Administration will also ensure that Colombia has successfully implemented key elements of the Labor Action Plan before bringing that agreement into force.

Implementation, Monitoring, and Enforcement

Following the entry into force of each agreement, work continues at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative to ensure that each partner country remains in compliance with its immediate obligations, and comes into compliance with obligations that take effect later on. As with all U.S. trade agreements, USTR will monitor compliance and actively enforce U.S. rights under these three trade agreements going forward.