THE WHITE HOUSE
PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH

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Fact Sheet: The United States and Asia: Enduring Freedom and Prosperity

In Focus: Trip to Asia 2008

White House News

President Bush Improved A Strong Alliance With Asian Nations
Based On Honesty, Respect, And Shared Values

Today, President Bush will visit Bangkok, Thailand, and acknowledge the 175th anniversary of U.S-Thailand relations. The Treaty of Amity and Commerce was the first such agreement for the United States in Asia, making Thailand our oldest ally in the region. Since then, the United States and Thailand have cooperated to build ties in all areas, including economic and military ties.

President Bush will reflect on the strong alliance between the United States and Asian nations. The United States has played an important role in helping Asia transform from a region mired in poverty and recovering from world war to one that is thriving and dynamic. We have helped to free emerging nations from security concerns by providing a stabilizing military presence, helped once-hostile nations resolve their differences peacefully through strong diplomatic engagement, and opened our markets to Asian exports to help powerful economies take shape.

When President Bush took office, he pursued four broad goals in Asia:

- Reinvigorating our alliances;
- Forging new relationships with countries that share our values;
- Seizing new opportunities for prosperity and growth; and
- Confronting shared challenges together.

As A Result Of The President's Vision, The United States Has Forged Deeper Ties With Nations Of Asia

Thanks to President Bush's leadership, when a new occupant moves into the White House next year, America's alliances in Asia will be the strongest they have ever been.

The United States has forged deeper ties with free nations across Asia. Countries that share our democratic ideals should be natural partners of the United States. The United States has bolstered each of our five treaty alliances in Asia. Since President Bush took office, the United States:

- Signed a new treaty with Australia that deepens our cooperation in defense trade.
- Helped the Philippines upgrade its military capabilities.
- Strengthened security initiatives in Thailand.
- Improved our force posture in South Korea by working to move our troops out of cities and towns and into more strategically effective positions.
- Reinforced our close alliance with Japan by launching new missile defense initiatives and by transforming our troop posture in a way that preserves our strong position for maintaining peace in the Pacific.

President Bush Has Led The Effort To Improve Relations With Other Key Nations In The Region

- **President Bush has dramatically improved our ties with India, the world's largest democracy.** The President reached a historic agreement with India on civilian nuclear energy.
- **The President has partnered closely with Indonesia's freely-elected government to help develop democratic institutions after decades under military rule. The United States and**
- **Mongolia signed a landmark agreement to help boost democratic development.** The President has also enhanced cooperation with the thriving countries of ASEAN – now chaired by Thailand.
- **The United States has joined with free nations throughout the region to establish a new Asia Pacific Democracy Partnership.** This is the region's only organization whose sole focus is promoting democratic values and institutions in Asia.

Nations of the Asia Pacific now have more vibrant trade and investment ties than ever before – workers, consumers, and entrepreneurs across the region will reap the benefits for years to come. Last year, trade in goods between the United States and the Asian side of the Pacific reached $1 trillion. When President Bush took office, the United States only had free trade agreements in force with three countries – none of them in Asia. Today, we have agreements in force with 14 countries, including Australia and Singapore. The United States has concluded a promising agreement with South Korea, which the President is calling on Congress to pass. We have also begun negotiating a free trade agreement with Malaysia and a bilateral investment treaty with Vietnam. President Bush looks forward to resuming trade negotiations with Thailand. The United States has supported the vision of a Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific, which would bring trade barriers across the region.

Our Nations Are Confronting Serious Challenges To Our People And Our Prosperity

We are ensuring that whatever challenges the future may bring, the nations of the Asia Pacific will meet them together. Governments across the region have coordinated efforts to address pandemics such as the avian flu. The region has come together to respond to natural disasters, from the tsunami of 2004 to this year's cyclone. President Bush, along with leaders from Korea, Japan, China, India, and Australia, founded the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate to help advance practical work on the environment and sustainable development. The Major Economies of the region are working for a global climate agreement that improves energy security and cuts greenhouse gases without cutting economic growth.

Together, our nations are confronting the threat of terror and have captured and killed some of

the world's most dangerous terrorists. Democracies like Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia are taking determined stands against extremism and showing that Islam and tolerance go hand-in-hand. Many of America's friends in Asia have also stood with us in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Our nations seek an end to tyranny in Burma. Today, Mrs. Bush will travel to the Thai-Burmese border, where she will visit a resettlement camp and a medical clinic and meet with those providing important humanitarian assistance. President Bush will meet with Burmese human rights activists and restate the call on Burma's military junta rulers to release Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners.

Together, our nations are confronting the threat posed by a North Korea armed with nuclear weapons. The United States joined with China, South Korea, Japan, and Russia to create the Six-Party Talks, which led North Korea to pledge to dismantle its nuclear facilities and abandon its nuclear weapons. Recently, the regime submitted a declaration of its nuclear activities – now the North Korean regime must commit to help us verify the declaration and address outstanding concerns about its behavior, including its proliferation and uranium enrichment.

A Successful Future For Asia Requires Strong Involvement Of Both China And The United States

Under the President's leadership, the United States has established a new Strategic Economic Dialogue with China to discuss ways to ensure long-term growth and widely-shared prosperity in both economies, as well as issues such as currency exchange rates and intellectual property rights. The President is also making clear to China that being a global economic leader carries with it the duty to act responsibly on matters ranging from energy to the environment to development in Africa.

President Bush has met repeatedly with Chinese dissidents and religious believers. The President stands in firm opposition to China's detention of political dissidents, human rights advocates, and religious activists. President Bush continues to speak out for a free press, freedom of assembly, and labor rights. Trusting people with greater freedom is the only way for China to develop its full potential.

Ultimately, only China can decide what course it will follow – the United States and its partners are realistic and prepared for any possibility. Young people who grow up with the freedom to trade goods will ultimately demand the freedom to trade ideas, especially on an unrestricted internet. China must play by the rules of the international economic system, a system that benefits China and the United States. The United States strongly supported China's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001. The growth sparked by China's free market reforms is good for the Chinese people. China's new purchasing power is also good for the world because it provides an enormous market for exports from across the world.

The President's four goals in Asia have provided a platform for engagement with China for the United States and our allies. This constructive relationship has allowed President Bush to speak clearly, candidly, and consistently with China's leaders about our deep concerns over religious freedom and human rights.

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