

Remarks to Korean Business Leaders in Seoul, South Korea

June 30, 2019

The President. Thank you. Wow, thank you very much. Please. Thank you very much. That's so nice. That means you like us. And we like you. And it has been a great period of time for our two countries.

I want to thank you, Ambassador Harris. We put you here recently because we thought it might be a spot where we need somebody with great talent, and you've displayed that in our military for many years. We really appreciate it very much. Thank you, Ambassador.

You've led this Embassy with outstanding vision and skill, and we deeply appreciate your efforts. And I tell you, many of the businesspeople that I've met in this incredible country have told me very strongly that what we did with the Ambassador, that was just a tremendous move.

And you know, we're talking about certain things. You probably have heard the things we're talking about, and we're going to make a visit today to the DMZ because—longstanding visit with President Moon. And I just want to see how that's looking. And a lot of good things are happening with North Korea. I really believe that. A lot of good things. The relationship is very good. When I first came here, it was a disaster. It was a disaster.

In my opinion, had President Obama or somebody like President Obama—for instance, my opponent in the last election—had it worked that way, I honestly believe you would have been at war with North Korea. I've said it loud, and I've said it clear. And right now, as you know, we have no nuclear tests. We have no ballistic tests. We have gotten our hostages, our prisoners back, which we really appreciated, from Kim Jong Un, Chairman Kim. The remains are coming back as they get them, as they find them, the remains of our great heroes from the war. And we really appreciate that.

And there's a good feeling. There's a good relationship. And you know, I won't even say "developing." I just think we have a very good relationship, the two of us. I don't know about beyond the two of us, but I can say the two of us.

So we'll see how it all goes. And, again, I'm going to the DMZ, and we are—I understand that they're—they want to meet. And I'd love to say hello. It's going to be very short, but we are in territory that's very close. We don't have to take long trips to countries. So it's good for both of us. Let's see what happens. They're trying to work it out. Not so easy.

I'm delighted to return to the beautiful city of Seoul—incredible city—this week for my second visit to South Korea as President. That's a lot, when you think about it. I haven't been President very long, 2½ years. How time flies.

Today it's my distinct honor to join this very talented group of leaders, many of whom I recognize. I don't know all of you. I know some of you, but I recognize most of you. Great leaders. Great businesspeople.

You're a talented group, and you're from America and South Korea companies to discuss the critical economic relationship between the United States and South Korea. My thanks as well to Secretary Mnuchin and Secretary of State Under—we call them the "Under." Sometimes, the Under Secretary of States have tremendous—where is he? Where is our Under Secretary of State? Good. Congratulations. Great job. You're doing a fantastic job. Thank you very much for being here. And if you have any questions later, Keith, come see me, because there could be plenty of

questions. But they're very happy with the job you're doing. Thank you very much. And the job that our Secretary of State is doing is fantastic. Mike Pompeo.

For decades, the U.S.-South Korea alliance has advanced peace and security in this region, and far beyond. Today, our partnership is stronger than ever before. Following this event, I'll meet with President Moon to discuss many shared priorities, including enhancing our already robust economic ties. The United States is having probably the best economy we've ever had. We're doing phenomenally. Many, many companies—including South Korea—but many companies are coming into the United States from other places throughout the world. Car companies, in particular. They're going to Michigan. They're going to Ohio and North Carolina and Pennsylvania, Florida.

Over the past few days, President Moon and I have been in Osaka, Japan, for the G-20 summit. And I have to say that Prime Minister Abe did a fantastic job. It was a great summit, a lot of good spirit, a lot of good will. And that brings, really, very importantly, the world leaders together, each, to discuss some of the most important economic opportunities and challenges facing our nations. And one-on-ones are very important when you have individual complaints.

I'm sure most of you haven't heard, but I met with President Xi of China. I know you didn't hear about that. But we had, actually, a very good meeting. A really good meeting, I think. So we're continuing with our discussions on a trade deal. We'll see what happens. A good chance.

During the summit, I shared the progrowth policies that have helped the United States achieve extraordinary economic success and called on all G-20 members to cooperate based on the principles of fairness and reciprocity—such an important word. Maybe my favorite word of all is "reciprocity."

The United States and South Korea have made great progress in reducing our trade imbalance and unleashing new prosperity for both of our countries. And as you heard your great Ambassador—and our great Ambassador say, we've reduced the number to by about 60 percent, which is pretty great. Good for both countries, actually.

Last year, we reduced the trade deficits of goods between the United States and South Korea by more than 20 percent, and that number is moving very rapidly along. And we announced a totally renegotiated United States-Korea trade deal, which went into effect this last January 1. And that was something that looked like it wasn't going to be happening, and we got it done. Good for both countries.

Our upgraded agreement will benefit workers in both the United States and South Korea and includes strong provisions to increase South Korea's access to the finest American-made products, including automobiles, agricultural crops, medicines, and more. Under the terms of this deal, South Korea will double the number of American cars that can enter the market each year.

So the car companies are very happy with it, and it gets to be just much more fair. We must remain vigilant and ensure that we keep moving forward toward a more balanced trade relationship and further reduce our trade deficit.

Our countries also enjoy a thriving investment relationship. Since 2017, Korean investment in the United States has expanded by billions and billions of dollars. This includes Lotte Group's recent investment of \$3.1 billion in Louisiana.

And Chairman Shin Dong-bin—I think he's here. There you are. Such a young man. [Laughter] Look at that—[laughter]—to have done such a good job. It's incredible. How did you do that? Would you get up here please and speak? [Laughter] Beautiful job. Thank you very much. Fantastic job. We appreciate it. And we have a great working relationship. Your

investment of \$3.1 billion in Louisiana is going to be a great investment. You know that. So congratulations. Thank you very much for being here.

Korean Air and Boeing have also recently announced that Korean Air will acquire 30 brandnew 787s—a great plane, Dreamliner—a deal worth over \$9 billion. And Kee-Hong Woo—where are you? Thank you very much. Thank you very much for being here. From Korean Air is here. And you've done a great job with Korean Air. Congratulations. Really great. And Eric John, president of Boeing Korea. Where's Eric? Thank you, Eric. Good job. Good. Thank you. Great plane. Thank you both for being here. And congratulations.

Hyundai, Samsung, and CJ, Doosan, and SK Group all here this morning. They were all here represented by their top people. And I really appreciate it. They've made very large investments in our country, including the companies represented in the room; they've created more than 50,000 brandnew jobs in the United States. We have to tell that to the people of the United States. And it's very important to tell them. There's a lot of investment going back into the United States. And we hope that you'll continue to expand.

Could I ask you all to stand up—the three folks? Hyundai, Samsung, CJ, and SK. Where's SK? Thank you very much. Congratulations. It's a great job. I recognize all four of you, I must tell you. Very famous business leaders and very great business leaders. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. We'll see you later.

There's never been a better time to invest or do business and create jobs in America. We passed the largest tax cut and reform in the history of our country and eliminated more than 30,000 pages of job-killing regulations, a record. You don't have any regulation problem, I know, in South Korea. Do you? *[Laughter]* You have any?

We slashed our business tax rate from the highest in the developed world to one of the most competitive anywhere in the developed world. We were so high that it was very hard for people to really understand how they could do it. We've taken back hundreds of billions of dollars from overseas. We weren't allowed to take that. That money was just—it was impossible to do. Both bureaucratically and tax wise, it was so expensive. Now we're bringing in—Apple alone brought in \$230 billion, and they're spending it in the United States.

Capital investment by businesses now can be 100-percent tax deductible, something that nobody knew. And if you look, the 1-year provision is something that nobody thought was—deducting expense in the first year—something nobody thought they've ever see, and it's had a tremendous impact on the country.

Unemployment in the United States is at the lowest level it's been in 51 years. And we expected that level is even—that number is even going to get better, because there's tremendous—companies are moving in. We have companies moving in, car companies moving in. In particular, car companies. We hadn't had a plant built in years, in decades, actually. And now we have many plants being built all throughout the United States, cars.

According to the World Economic Forum, our financial system, business dynamism, and labor market all rank number one in the world. That's a great rank. And we were slipping badly, as you know.

In fact, I just opened a LNG plant in Louisiana. It's a \$10 billion plant. And I think a couple of other folks in this room happen to be involved in that. But we also had tremendous Japanese investment. It's a \$10 billion. It's going to employ 10,000 jobs. It's, I guess, one of the biggest plants I've ever seen. And right in Louisiana also.

And they opened it. I hear it's doing phenomenally well. It was beautiful. It was built on time, on budget, but it was help up for many, many years—for more than a decade—because they

couldn't get the permits. And I got in, I got them those permits. I didn't know anybody. I don't want to know anybody. All I wanted to do was, I wanted to have them build that plant. And we got them the permits very quickly, through EPA and all of the other places that we had to get them. But that was being held up. It looked, actually, like it wasn't going to happen, and I got it done.

You look at Keystone Pipeline, the Dakota Access Pipeline, they were dead. They were really in trouble. Dakota Access had the worst of all worlds. It had built the pipeline, but it couldn't connect it—okay?—because it had environmental problems. False environmental problems. Problems that shouldn't have been a problem. But they had built it.

And I was actually going to say maybe the country should have a piece of the action. Steve, we could have said, "Listen, give us half of the profits for the rest, and we're going to give you that final permit." Right? *[Laughter]* I could have done it. We can't revert back to my business days. Can't do that. But we got it approved for them, and we got the permits, and they were able to connect. And they immediately opened.

And the Keystone, as you know, is one of the biggest anywhere, and that's been under consideration for a long time. And we got it approved in my first few days in office. The head of the big company, the pipeline company—they're actually based in Canada, which—a little sad; it just means we have a very good relationship with Canada. We just made a deal with Canada and Mexico, which is a tremendous trade deal, and hopefully, we'll get that passed soon, in Congress.

But the head probably said: "Gee, I couldn't get it for years and years. I couldn't get my permit. Now Trump gets elected; I get my permit." And you people, as great businessmen, know what's going to happen. He's sitting there, and he will be inundated now with every consultant that worked on the project for the last 10 years, and they're all going to want these massive fees. They're going to want millions of dollars, because they're going to say that they did such a good job.

But I never spoke to any of them. I don't want to speak to any of them. They didn't do a damn thing, and they're going to get millions of dollars, right? And everyone in this room knows what I'm talking about. But it's one of those things. We don't want to have that situation happen. But we got Keystone approved. We got it approved early. And it's going to be a tremendous pipeline.

Economic growth is now over 3 percent. And for the first quarter—which is always our worst quarter; it's always down around 1, less than 1—it was 3.2 percent, which is shocking. We are taking in tremendous dollars from China with the tariffs of goods: \$250 billion at 25 percent. That will remain under our deal until we have a new deal, and then we'll see what happens, whether it's more or less or whatever. We'll see what happens.

We were very close to having a deal with China. And then, unfortunately, things happened, and the deal didn't happen. But we're now back on track, so we'll see what happens. Now we're going to—we started it up. We had a very good meeting. We really had a great meeting yesterday. And I like President Xi a lot. He's—I consider him a friend, and—but I like him a lot. I've gotten to know him very well. He's a strong gentleman, right? Anybody that—he's a strong guy, tough guy, very smart, and loves China. And I love the United States. *[Laughter]*

All of this is just the beginning to, really, want—I just wanted to have a group of the leaders. I didn't know they were going to get—you're not just South Korean leaders. You're world-renowned leaders. You have done things that are incredible. I mean, some of the companies.

I happened to fly over a building. It was one of the largest buildings I've ever seen: Samsung. Samsung. It was one of the largest buildings I've ever seen. And it was a manufacturing

building. And you know what I'm talking about, right? I looked; I said, "What the hell is that?" [Laughter] It was acre on acre, except it was piled up. How tall is that building? Like 12 or 10? Ten stories?

Participant. Next time you come to Korea. [Laughter]

The President. I want to see it. I want to see it. I want to get some ideas. Because this was laid up on top. We usually just go in one direction. And it was really great.

And I must tell you also—I said, "What is that beautiful building?" And that was your great tower. Lotte Tower was beautiful. Love the design. I said, it's pretty hard to miss it, right? [Laughter] We're flying in. It wasn't like, "Oh, gee, what's that?" But I knew immediately. I knew it from even pictures. But that's a beautiful tower, and I know it's done very well. Congratulations. Beautiful job.

It's nice to build them nice, right? It doesn't cost that much more. I tried to explain to friends of mine. I have a competitor in New York, and he builds very inexpensively. And then, he wonders why we get higher rents and why we get higher condo prices. And I look at his building. He said, "What the hell is going on?" He has windows that are so little because he saves \$2. [Laughter] He saves nothing. I mean, sometimes, a wall is more expensive than a window. Sometimes brick and mortar is more expensive than glass. So you make them big. You have nice, big, fat windows, and you have certain things.

But you folks have done a great job. Really great. Thank you very much.

But this is all just the beginning. We're going to have a lot of great relationship with South Korea. I think I've done a good job in stability. I can say the Ambassador came. When he met me at the airport yesterday, he said when he first came here, people were nervous. A lot of bad things were happening. A lot of bad things with missiles flying over Japan. And they weren't too thrilled in Japan either, by the way.

And now you don't have that. And people aren't feeling the same way that they felt when I became President. When I became President—it's hard to believe, 2½ years ago, I became President. And the biggest—probably the biggest thing was Kim Jong Un and the problems that you were having with them. And a lot of bad things could've happened. Could've gone very bad, very fast.

And, as you know, we took a very tough stand, and so did he. And then, all of a sudden, we came together, and I was asking other people, "Have you ever spoken to him?" They said no. I said, "How can you not speak to him?" They didn't speak to him. You don't lose anything by speaking. And we did, ultimately, speak, and we got along great. But it's a lot different now. The Ambassador was telling me—he said he got here and people were very nervous. They were having drills, many, many drills all the times. Drills, drills. And—to get under cover. And you don't have that anymore.

So let's see what happens. Nothing is final. Got a long way to go. But this a situation that could've been really bad. You know, at home, they think that I'm a, sort of, a tough warmonger. I'm a warmonger. They thought that, when I got elected, within in the first year we'd be in world war three. And I'm really the opposite of a warmonger.

But we built our military now. It's stronger than it's ever been. Brandnew. I mean, we spent one-point—if you think, we spent \$716 billion this year, \$700 billion last year. This year, we're going for, actually, more than that, potentially. We have brandnew fighter jets, brandnew ships, brandnew military equipment for the soldiers. Very important. Can never forget that. All brandnew.

We were very depleted from fighting wars all over, fighting in the Middle East for 19 years, in the Middle East, just being there. And we're now—you probably heard we knocked out the caliphate as soon I got in. I knocked them out very quickly. Very quickly. Once we started, it was a very quick operation.

We have the greatest military in the world. There's nobody close. We have the greatest equipment in the world. Missiles and planes and everything else. The F-35 fighter jet, which is the hot one now. I was talking to one the pilots. These guys are central casting. There's nobody in Hollywood that looks like these people—[laughter]—with their crew cut—boom—under the eyes, the whole thing.

I speak to this guy, and I said, "How good is the F-35?" "Very good, sir." "How does it compare to so and so?" You know, another country. "Well, they have a basic problem, sir. They can't see it. You could be right next them; they can't see it." And I said, "That sounds good." They say it's really hard to win when they can't see the plane. It's really stealth, and it's really great. And by the way, you're ordering those planes, in addition to a lot of Boeings. But you're ordering those planes.

So I just want to tell you that you're our friend. I've had a tremendous relationship. President Moon has treated me and our country with great respect, which I appreciate. Because we're doing a lot for you. We're doing a lot. We're spending a lot of money and money that hasn't been reimbursed. And they've—they're agreeing to reimburse us for some of this, because the cost is astronomical. We have 42,000 soldiers. We've had them for many years. And we're working on that, and it's really working along well. But most importantly, we're doing the job.

And you're going to have a very safe country, and it's already a great country. And it's an honor to be with you, especially so many people that I know and that I recognize. A lot of people don't. You know, a lot of people don't know there's great business genius. They don't understand that that means. But we understand what business genius is. People say, "How come so and so is always successful?" Because he's a business genius. It's one of those things. It's a talent. Just like baseball is a talent, or golf is a talent, or anything.

We had, recently, the U.S. Women's Open at my course in Bedminster, New Jersey. And I think 9 of the top 10 finishers were from South Korea. [Laughter] Do you know that? Nine of the top ten. I said, "What's going on over here?"

So I want to just thank you. You have a great country, and it's an honor to be with you. Thank you all very much. Thank you.

Chairman of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong Un of North Korea/President Trump's Planned Visit to the Demilitarized Zone

Q. Mr. President, is Chairman Kim going to meet you at the DMZ today? Has he committed?

The President. Well, we'll see. He very much wants to. I'm going there. This was—[inaudible]—when I told him we were going, that I will see him. But there was—we'll try to work it out. [Inaudible] Very short. It will be a very short—very short. Virtually a handshake, but that's okay. A handshake means a lot. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:22 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Seoul hotel. In his remarks, he referred to 2016 Democratic Presidential nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton; Kim Hak-song, Tony Kim, and Kim Dong-chul, U.S. citizens formerly detained by North Korean officials who returned to the U.S. on May 10, 2018; Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment Keith J. Krach; Kee-Hong Woo, executive vice president and representative

director, Korean Air Co., Ltd.; and Russell K. Girling, president and chief executive officer, TransCanada. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the audio was incomplete.

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