

*Administration of Barack Obama, 2016*

**Remarks Prior to a Meeting With Business, Government, and National Security Leaders To Discuss the Trans-Pacific Partnership and an Exchange With Reporters**

*September 16, 2016*

*The President.* I am really pleased to be joined by this outstanding, bipartisan group to reemphasize how important it is for us to be out there and set the rules for the global economy.

As all of you know, I just returned from my 11th trip to Asia. This is the most populous, fastest growing part of the world. It is an area where we have the potential to sell American goods, promote American business, and help American workers, because we know that export industries tend to pay higher wages and are oftentimes some of the most successful companies in the world. And precisely because 95 percent of our markets are outside of the United States, and because for us to succeed in this increasingly integrated economy, we've got to make sure that we've got a level playing field and that American workers and American businesses are able to compete fairly.

What we've done over the last several years is negotiate what we call the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, which is a high-standard trade agreement that makes other countries lower their tariff barriers so that there aren't taxes on U.S. goods that are sold there, that gets other countries to raise their labor standards so they're not undercutting U.S. workers, that gets other countries to raise environmental standards so that as we do our part to conserve the planet, other countries are doing their fair share. And after a lot of negotiations, we've got what is the most progressive, effective trade deal that we've ever seen.

And this bipartisan group made up of business leaders, mayors and Governors, Republicans and Democrats, national security leaders and military leaders, the reason they're here is because they know this is important for our economy and they know that this is important for our national security and our standing in the world.

Right now China is pushing hard to create their own trading regime out in Asia. And I promise you that China is not going to be setting up a bunch of rules that are going to be to the advantage of American companies and American businesses. If we are not in there and making sure that fair trade is established in the Asia market, we're going to be cut out.

And I know that politics these days tends to look at trade as something that is negative. But if you talk to the farmers and the ranchers and the manufacturers and the service industries that are dependent on us selling American exports around the world, they will tell you we've got to get this done.

So I just want to say thank you to this outstanding group. We're going to spend some time strategizing about how we can get the message out. It's frustrating, I think sometimes, that there's so much misinformation floating around on this. But the good news is, is that people whose business it is to make sure that America has a strong position in the world and that our economy is improving understand that this needs to get done. We've got over a hundred mayors who signed up to make sure that this gets done. We've got Democratic and Republican Governors who are going to push to make sure that this gets done. We've got chambers of commerce and business leaders who are going to work really hard to make sure that people have the right information.

But if you're frustrated about rules of trade that disadvantage America, if you're frustrated about jobs being shipped overseas and other countries selling goods into our country freely when we can't sell our stuff into other countries freely, then you want to get this thing passed. You want to get this thing done.

And I thought it was important for people, even though we're in an election season, to know that this is not something I'm letting up on. I don't have any more elections to run, and the reason that I'm pushing this so hard is because I know and other countries know and China know that if we get this done, advantage America. And if we don't, then we're going to be disadvantaged for a long time to come.

And it's the right thing to do. And even if the politics of it sometimes are tough, we're going to keep on making sure that we position ourselves as well as we can to be able to compete not just next year or 5 years from now, but 20 and 30 years from now.

All right? Thank you very much, everybody.

### *The President's Birthplace/2016 Presidential Election*

Q. Mr. President, Donald Trump is now finally acknowledging that, yes, you were born in America. Your reaction?

*The President.* I, Jonathan [Jonathan Karl, ABC News], have no reaction. And I'm shocked that a question like that would come up at a time when we've got so many other things to do. Well, I'm not that shocked, actually. [Laughter] It's fairly typical. We got other business to attend to. I was pretty confident about where I was born. I think most people were as well. And my hope would be that the Presidential election reflects more serious issues than that.

All right? Thank you. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:35 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. Meeting participants included former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York City; Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta, GA; Gov. John R. Kasich of Ohio; Gov. John Bel Edwards of Louisiana; former Secretary of the Treasury Henry M. Paulson, Jr.; Virginia M. Rometty, president and chief executive officer, IBM; and former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Adm. James G. Stavridis, USN. A reporter referred to Republican Presidential Nominee Donald J. Trump.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement, business, government, and national security leaders, meeting with President; Interviews With the News Media : Exchanges with reporters :: White House.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Subjects:* Asia : Trade with U.S.; Commerce, international : Environmental protection standards; Commerce, international : Free and fair trade; Elections : 2016 Presidential and congressional elections; Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

*DCPD Number:* DCPD201600602.