**Economic**

- Over the past 50 years, South Korea has dramatically transformed its economy from one of the poorest in the world to one of the wealthiest nations, on par with other developed countries, with a per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of $33,200 (2013).
- Once a U.S. foreign aid recipient, South Korea is now the 6th largest trading partner of the United States, with U.S. exports totaling $41.6 billion in 2013, supporting over 250,000 U.S. jobs.
- According to The College Board, South Korea has the 2nd highest college graduation rate in the world at 55.5 percent (the U.S. is ranked 12th with 41 percent of Americans between the ages of 25 – 34 years old who have an associate's degree or higher).
- Nearly 38 percent of degrees awarded in South Korea are in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields (vs. 16 percent for the United States).
- South Korea is the 6th largest trading partner of the United States, with U.S. exports totaling $41.6 billion in 2013, supporting over 250,000 U.S. jobs.
- Since 2011, total U.S. exports to South Korea increased by 3.8 percent, excluding exports of corn and mineral fuel (coal) because of the global export downturn and drought.
  a. U.S. exports of beneficiary goods covered by the Korea-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA) have increased by 6.9 percent since implementation in March 2012.
  b. Overall U.S. passenger vehicle exports to Korea increased 80 percent since 2011.
  c. South Korea is America's 6th largest agricultural export market worth $5.2 billion.
  d. The U.S. exported $609 million worth of beef to Korea in 2013, making Korea the 5th largest export market for U.S. beef.
- South Korea was ranked 7th in terms of ease of doing business in 2013 by the World Bank.
- U.S. foreign direct investment (FDI) in South Korea was $2.4 billion for 2013, for a cumulative investment of over $35 billion.
- Korea is now the 16th largest foreign investor in the United States, with $5.2 billion invested in 2012, representing a 33 percent increase over 2011, for a total stock of over $24 billion.
  a. Examples of Korean FDI in the U.S. include more than familiar named-companies such as Hyundai (Montgomery, Alabama) and Kia (West Point, Georgia) but other firms such as CJ BIO America of Fort Dodge, Iowa and Kiswel Co. Ltd. of Florence, Kentucky.

**Political/Security**

- 2013 represented the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) alliance with the signing of the Armistice agreement ending the Korean War and the mutual defense treaty.
- Over 325,000 U.S. military personnel served during this conflict, which resulted in nearly 37,000 battle and non-battle deaths.
- Currently, 28,500 U.S. troops are stationed in South Korea.
- South Korea provides up to 45 percent of the total non-personnel stationing costs for the U.S. troop presence and has contributed troops to support every major U.S. military engagement post-1953 (Vietnam, Persian Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq).
- South Korea hosted the 2010 G-20 Summit, the 2011 Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, and the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit.
President Park Geun-hye, the first female president of South Korea, of the Saenuri (New Frontier) Party (NFP), was elected in December 2012 to a single five-year term.

The Saenuri Party has 156 seats out of a total of 300 seats in South Korea’s National Assembly (the main opposition party – the New Politics Alliance for Democracy (NPAD) – has 130 seats and other smaller parties hold the remaining seats). Members of the National Assembly are elected to four-year terms and the next election is scheduled for April 2016.

**Korean influence in America**

- Approximately **1.7 million Americans of Korean-descent** live in the United States.
- Representing the 9th largest source of foreign visitors, **1.36 million South Koreans came to the United States** in 2013, spending over $4.6 billion (11 percent increase over previous year).
- More than **70,000 South Koreans studied in the United States** in the 2012/2013 school year, representing the 3rd largest contingent of foreign students in America.
- **Top ten states** where Korean-Americans reside include (in descending order): California, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Texas, Washington, Illinois, Georgia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.
- **Hawaii** has the highest per capita concentration of Korean-Americans of any state.
- The **top three U.S. metropolitan areas** where Korean-Americans reside include (in descending order): Los Angeles, New York, and Baltimore/Washington.
- Since 1953, over **100,000 South Korean children have been adopted** by U.S. parents.
- The Korean community in the United States include notables in working in diverse sectors such as actor **Daniel Dae Kim** (“Hawaii Five-O” and “Lost”), author **Linda Sue Park** (A Single Shard, 2002 Newberry Medal winner), ladies professional golfer **Michelle Wie**, **Peter Kim** (10-year president of Merck Research Laboratories), **Michelle Rhee** (former Chancellor of the District of Columbia Public Schools), and **Ambassador Sung Kim** (current U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea).

The Korea Economic Institute of America (KEI) is registered under the Foreign Agents Registration Act as an agent of the Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, a public corporation established by the Government of the Republic of Korea. This material is filed with the Department of Justice, where the required registration statement is available for public inspection. KEI is not engaged in the practice of law, does not render legal services, and is not a lobbying organization.

1800 K St. NW, Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20006
202.464.1982

www.keia.org