



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on December 4, 2013

South Korea Sets Sights on TPP Membership

Another country with a gross domestic product (GDP) a fraction of that of the United States is about to jump on board the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

The [Wall Street Journal reports](#) that South Korea will soon consider joining the much maligned, super-secret trade pact.

In the article, South Korea's Finance Minister Hyun Oh-seok is quoted as saying that his country "needs to first show its interest in the TPP." Accordingly, trade representatives from South Korea will reportedly make overtures to their counterparts in the countries already signed on to the agreement.

The *Wall Street Journal* write-up of the potential partnership mentions that the TPP "would create a free-trade bloc that makes up nearly 40% of the global economy."

That number seems to be accurate, but the statistics behind that figure reveal just how unfair this "fair trade" agreement is when viewed from the point of view of the United States' economic strength relative to the other would-be TPP participants.

In September, the World Bank released the [GDP rankings for every country in the world](#). The data for the 12 TPP partners, China, and South Korea (both Asian nations are considering appealing to join the TPP before year's end) are provided below:

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- The United States ranks first with a GDP of over \$15.68 trillion.
- China is second with a GDP of \$8.3 trillion, a little more than half that of the United States.
- Japan is next with a GDP of \$5.9 trillion. That ranks third worldwide, behind the United States and China.
- Canada ranks 11th with a GDP of about \$1.8 trillion.
- Australia ranks 12th with a GDP of about \$1.52 trillion.
- Mexico ranks 14th with a GDP of just over \$1.17 trillion.
- South Korea comes in just below Mexico with a GDP of nearly \$1.13 trillion.
- Malaysia ranks 34th in the world with a GDP of right at \$303 billion.
- Singapore ranks 35th with a GDP of about \$274 billion.
- Chile ranks 36th with a GDP of about \$268 billion.
- Peru ranks 50th with a GDP of about \$197 billion.





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- New Zealand ranks 55th with a GDP of just over \$157 billion.
- Vietnam ranks 57th with a GDP of nearly \$142 billion.
- Brunei ranks 112th with a GDP of just shy of \$17 billion.

From a purely mathematical perspective, U.S. participation in the TPP doesn't add up. The combined GDPs of the TPP countries excluding China and Japan equal roughly one-third of that of the United States. The relevant question is whether partnership with these countries will result in a strengthening of their economies or a weakening of our own.

Admittedly, a country's GDP is only one of many relevant metrics that could be used to compare relative global economic position. The fact is, however, that when looking at just that, it is evident that the Obama administration is anxious to fix the economic prosperity of the United States to countries whose relative weakness will pull it down.

Beyond the economic disparity of the TPP, there is the damage to American sovereignty that will accompany acceptance of the TPP. The biggest step toward globalization and a severing of any political control by the elected representatives of the American people over the establishment of trade policy will come from the achievement of the ultimate aim of the TPP: creation of a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP).

Twenty-one countries in the bloc known as the [Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation \(APEC\)](#) would make up the FTAAP, including China and Russia.

All of these trade agreements share a similar trajectory. As [described earlier by *The New American*](#):

The architects and promoters of the TPP and FTAAP frequently point with admiration to the "integration" process of the European Union (EU) as the model they would like to see implemented for the Asia-Pacific rim nations. As with the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), the Trans-Pacific Partnership has been designed to follow the EU example of relentless widening and deepening, constantly eroding national sovereignty, while building "transnational governance" that is not restrained by the checks and balances of national constitutions.

An [article written in the *Georgetown Journal of International Law*](#) backs up this prediction, explaining that the TPP negotiations "are designed to culminate in a 'gold standard'" free trade agreement (FTA). The article continues:

The TPP negotiations are among the more recent of a large number of FTAs and Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) that have been or are being negotiated between the member economies of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. Since the APEC Leaders' Bogor Declaration in November 1994, the member economies have been committed on some level to the objective of achieving an environment for "free and open" trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region.

In the argot of globalism, "free and open trade" translates as "economic and political integration." Later in the Georgetown piece, former U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Ron Kirk is quoted as calling for the TPP to be "more than a broad concept."

Additional evidence of the "ambitious" goal of the TPP discussions is found in a press release issued by representatives of the member nations attending an APEC confab in Honolulu in 2011:

We are delighted to have achieved this milestone in our common vision to establish a comprehensive, next-generation regional agreement that liberalizes trade and investment and



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addresses new and traditional trade issues and 21st-century challenges. We are confident that this agreement will be a model for ambition for other free trade agreements in the future.

The [USTR's TPP website declares](#), "The TPP is the most credible pathway to broader Asia-Pacific regional economic integration."

Likely, the majority of these changes will come in the form of the surrendering by Congress of the right to set trade policy to an unelected FTAAP board of directors, led, of course, by representatives of the other member states, including those with lesser economic strength and those ruled by communist regimes.

"On the economic side, expanding the geographic area of a free trade zone effectively dilutes remaining protection for domestic industries and is thus strongly resisted. On the political side, the rules of origin, different in each agreement, are meant to restrain competition and to provide side payments to domestic companies," [an article by the Peterson Institute explains](#).

How will the links of this "trade" chain be forged? According to the Peterson piece, "the pathway to an FTAAP will follow a hybrid approach that links elements of the TPP and intra-Asian approaches to trade integration."

Integration is a word that is painful to the ears of constitutionalists and those unwilling to surrender U.S. sovereignty to a committee of globalists who are unelected by the American people and unaccountable to them. Integration is an internationalist tool for subordinating American law to the globalist bureaucracy at the United Nations.

Economic and political integration will push the once-independent United States of America into yet another collectivist regional bloc that will facilitate the complete dissolution of the economic and political independence of the United States, converting the nation and the 50 states into nothing more than administrative outposts of a one-world government.

Joe A. Wolverton, II, J.D. is a correspondent for The New American and travels frequently nationwide speaking on topics of nullification, the NDAA, and the surveillance state. He is the host of The New American Review radio show that is simulcast on YouTube every Monday. Follow him on Twitter @TNAJoeWolverton and he can be reached at jwolverton@thenewamerican.com



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