



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
CITY OF CHICAGO

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**MAYOR EMANUEL WELCOMES REPUBLIC OF KOREA PRESIDENT LEE MYUNG-BAK
AND FIRST LADY OF KOREA MRS. KIM YOON-OK TO CHICAGO**

*Bi-lateral meeting held Friday afternoon followed by reception and dinner at the
Chicago Cultural Center*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today welcomed the President of the Republic of Korea, President Lee Myung-Bak, as well as First Lady of Korea Mrs. Kim Yoon-Ok, to Chicago.

“Chicago is a city of immigrants and all of us are proud of this heritage,” said Mayor Emanuel. “Chicago is home to the third-largest Korean community in the United States. Over the years, we have forged strong business, economic, and personal relationships with our Korean friends. I am confident that Chicagoans of Korean descent will continue to play an important role in our city.”

The dinner came after a bi-lateral meeting between representatives of the City of Chicago and members of the Korean delegation. In addition to Mayor Emanuel and selected members of his administration, local companies that do business with Korea were represented.

“It is wonderful being here in Chicago,” said President Lee Myung-Bak. “Korea and Chicago go back many years. In 1893, Korea took part in the World Fair. It was the first time that Korea went overseas officially.” President Lee’s remarks continued to describe recent interactions between Chicago and Korea, including the sister city relationship established between Busan and Chicago.

This week, the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement was passed by the United States Congress, a fact that President Lee and Mayor Emanuel mentioned in their remarks. Mayor Emanuel



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praised the efforts of both President Lee and President Obama in bringing the agreement to fruition.

“The agreement was developed with great thought on the part of both nations,” Mayor Emanuel said. “President Obama was determined to create a modern trade agreement that reflects modern times and that truly works to the benefit of both partner nations. Now, that dream will become a reality. I congratulate both nations on this historic achievement, as well as the two Presidents who were so vital to its passage.”

President Lee traveled to Chicago from Detroit, where he had visited a General Motors plant with President Obama. On Thursday, the White House hosted a state dinner for the Korean President and First Lady, as well as their delegation.

The event was held at the Chicago Cultural Center and featured Heather Headley and the Chicago Children's Choir.

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