



# NEWS

## AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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## Taxpayer Advocates Applaud Trade Agreement

*U.S.-Central Asia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement signed on June 1, 2004*

WASHINGTON – Today Americans for Tax Reform, the nation’s leading taxpayer advocates, applauded the Bush administration’s effort to diversify and strengthen trade relations with five Central Asia nations – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Ambassadors from each of the five countries joined U.S. Trade Representative Robert Zoellick on June 1, 2004 to sign the U.S.-Central Asia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

**“Opening up trade leads to economic growth for all participants,”** said Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform. **“Consumers, businesses, and workers can look forward to competing in a market free from protectionist dictators.”**

The five Central Asian nations gained independence from the Soviet Union over a decade ago, and since then, have been struggling to open up trade. In 2003, U.S. exports to Central Asia amounted to \$548.1 million, and included machinery, equipment, chemicals, agricultural products and aircrafts. U.S. imports from Central Asia totaled \$570.3 million and included mineral fuels, chemicals, textiles, metals and cotton.

The TIFA serves as a major step towards strengthening the economic relationship between the U.S. and the five Central Asian nations as well as intraregional relationships in Central Asia. Through the TIFA, forums are held regularly to address trade and investment issues that hamper the goal of open trade and economic growth.

**“This is another success for the Bush administration’s tireless effort to promote open trade,”** Norquist commended.

Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal, state and local tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or at [jcollegio@atr.org](mailto:jcollegio@atr.org)