

**THOMAS C. LEPPERT
MAYOR**



CITY OF DALLAS

NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor Says Dallas is Best US Partner for China Trade Tianjin is Trade Delegation's First Major Stop

Mayor Tom Leppert today said today Dallas will be a key partner with China as the Asian nation becomes a major player in the global marketplace.

"Dallas is the most attractive market in the US for the needs of the expanding Chinese economy," said Mayor Leppert in Tianjin, the first major stop on his trade mission to China.

Mayor Leppert made the comments in a meeting with officials and business leaders in Tianjin.

"We know there are areas within our country, in other parts of the world that view China's growth with concern. But we understand it," said Mayor Leppert. "We both share an optimism about tomorrow. We are both focused on building economies and we know the importance of building relationships."

The relationship here has been a long one. Dallas and Tianjin have had a Friendship City agreement since 1995, Dallas' oldest such pact in China. Mayor Leppert today reaffirmed the city's commitment to that relationship, and presented gifts to Mayor Huang Xingguo, including an authentic Dallas Mavericks jersey with Mayor Huang's name and the number one sewn on the back.

Tianjin is one of four economic zones that answer directly to the central government, making it somewhat autonomous in nature. This has led to tremendous economic growth. In 1993, its nominal gross domestic product was \$1.6 billion (USD). By 2005, it was \$22.6 billion. Tianjin has also become one of the country's major ports. Its foreign trade export value to the US was \$18 billion (USD) and over 70 multi-national corporations from the Fortune Global 500 have set up companies in the area.

Mayor Leppert promoted the bustling International Inland Port of Dallas (IIPoD) as a key rail and trucking distribution point for Asian trade traveling through overcrowded ports on the west coast of the US and Mexico.

“Dallas clearly wants to see a good deal of that trade between Asia and the US moving through our Inland Port in Southern Dallas County,” said Mayor Leppert.

In addition to promoting the benefits of the Inland Port as a trade and logistics hub, Mayor Leppert also wants to attract new investment in Dallas in the form of manufacturing and distribution facilities.

One of the special zones within Tianjin is the Tianjin Economic-technological Development Area (TEDA). For several years, officials in Dallas and with TEDA have worked to boost trade. In 1996, TEDA opened an office in Dallas, and today TEDA signaled a strengthening of that relationship by announcing that a permanent manager will be assigned there in June.

This was a long day for the trade delegation which arrived in China late Saturday for an overnight stay in Beijing. After a brief stop at Tiananmen Square, the delegation took a bus to Tianjin, which is a port city about 2.5 hours to the west of Beijing. It is the third largest urban area after Shanghai and Beijing

Late Sunday, the group flew to Shanghai. Tomorrow some of the delegation will meet with airline officials to help establish a direct DFW-China flight. They'll then fly to Qingdao to meet with city and business leaders before returning to Shanghai late Monday night.

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See photos on next page

Photos — Tianjin, the Trade Delegation's First Major Stop



Mayor Tom Leppert with Tianjin Mayor Huang Xingguo



The trade delegation at TEDA Headquarters. From left - Dallas Councilmember Jerry Allen; Councilmember Tennell Atkins and his wife Marshella; Nancy and Councilmember Ron Natinsky; Laura and Mayor Tom Leppert, TEDA Vice Chairman Ni Xiangyu