

《北美自由贸易协定谈判重启 美国、加拿大、墨西哥官员碰面》

Washington, DC is hosting the first round of re-negotiations for the North American Free Trade Agreement. It's the first time in history that a wide ranging, free trade agreement is being reworked.

Back at the negotiating table after more than twenty years, they are neighbors-turned trading partners. Canadian Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland said "we pursue trade free and fair, knowing it's not a zero sum game," while Canada and Mexico are seeking small changes.

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said, "I want to be clear that he is not interested in a mere tweaking of a few provisions and a couple of updated chapters. We feel that NAFTA has fundamentally failed many, many Americans and needs major improvement."

The main priority for Washington is reducing its trade deficits with both neighbors. Last year, the U.S. had a goods trade deficit of 11 billion dollars with Canada, and 64 billion dollars with Mexico. But many economists say the best way to reduce trade deficits is to cut U.S. government spending. Millions in North America have a lot riding on the results, like business owners.

Mexican Economy Minister Ildefonso Guajardo said the issue is not tearing apart what it has worked, "but rather, how we can make our agreement work better." While Washington trade officials say U.S. President Donald Trump wants major overhaul.

"We have seen how some regions in Mexico have practically achieved full employment. We want to see how to continue this free-trade model with high competitiveness in our three countries as a region," Juan Pablo Castanon from the Business Coordination Council of Mexico said.

Flavio Volpe from Auto Parts Manufacturer's Association of Canada said that 75% vehicles are exported to consumers, "so I think that this administration is smart enough to understand that at some point if you increase the pain point for Canadian to Mexican cost, those costs are gonna be borne by the end consumer."

The talks wrap up Sunday. Two more rounds are expected next month in Mexico and Canada.