

# **U.S. opens industrial markets to Andeans**

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TUCSON, Arizona -- The United States will open 99 percent of its market to industrial products from Colombia, Peru and Ecuador, negotiators say.

The agreement came during the last day of the sixth round of multilateral negotiations under way to create a free-trade agreement between the Andean countries and the United States.

Tariffs for non-textile industrial products will be eliminated when the free-trade agreement is officially implemented but the Andean negotiators said this measure is an important step towards finalizing an agreement.

Peru, Colombia and Ecuador influenced the United States by softening their demands and increasing the percentage of products from the United States receiving zero tariffs from 40 percent to 82 percent.

Negotiators also made headway on agricultural tariffs, deciding to move away from general discussions to specific product-by-product negotiations, expected to take place during the next round of talks in Colombia.

Agricultural products will now be discussed according to their sensitivity in each country's national economy, allowing for easier negotiations amongst less sensitive products and greater security for important economic sectors.

The talks ended Thursday.