Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership

CPTPP/JS/2023/001

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) - Joint Ministerial Statement on the Occasion of the Seventh Commission Meeting.

Ka mahuta a Matariki i te pae, ka mahuta ō tātou tūmanako ki te tau
When Matariki rises above the horizon, our aspirations rise to the year ahead.

***Matariki hunga nui* – Matariki the gatherer of people**

The Seventh Commission Meeting, hosted by Aotearoa New Zealand took place in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, on 16 July. Ministers and Senior Officials representing Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Aotearoa New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Viet Nam and the United Kingdom have approved the following statement.

As the Meeting is taking place during Matariki, the heralding of the Māori New Year, we anchor our statement with a whakataukī, or proverb, which refers to the significance of this time of year and how Matariki can inspire our joint aspirations as the CPTPP members.

Matariki is a time for communities to gather and celebrate. It is with great pleasure that we welcome ratification and entry into force of the Agreement for Chile on 21 February. We are similarly delighted to formally recognise Brunei Darussalam's ratification and entry into force of the CPTPP on 12 July. These additions mean that 2023 is the first year where all the original CPTPP signatories have ratified and can participate as full Parties. This realises the original vision for the CPTPP as an Agreement that would connect, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific via trade and investment. The Membership also welcomes the first participation of the CPTPP's newest Member at the Commission, the United Kingdom, which expands the Agreement beyond the region.

At a time of resurgent protectionism, rising inflation and the instability caused by the ongoing recovery from the pandemic, and conflict, we reaffirmed our shared commitment to upholding the rules-based trading system, with the WTO at its core, including as a means for responding to economic coercion. As the current and future driver of economic growth, the importance of the Asia-Pacific region will only continue to grow. It is in all of our interests to ensure a region that is open, stable and prosperous, that is predictable and operates by agreed rules, standards and laws – where all countries are free from coercion.

We are committed to ensuring that the CPTPP continues to drive economic integration by promoting resilient supply chains and securing the global value chain, recognising that these will remain the cornerstones of our collective prosperity and wider security.

***Matariki ahunga nui* – the great mounds of Matariki, when food is gathered together to share**

We acknowledge the vital role trade plays in facilitating increased employment, productivity and incomes, and reassert our ongoing commitment that these benefits are shared across society, and in particular that women in all their diversity, Indigenous Peoples, micro, small and medium enterprises, other under-represented groups in our economies and all regions benefit from trade. To this end, we will redouble efforts to ensure the CPTPP continues to be at the forefront of inclusive and sustainable global trading arrangements and that Members' implementation of the Agreement positively impacts all our peoples.

Recognising the strong nexus between trade and environment, we emphasise that the CPTPP should continue to be at the forefront of global efforts to promote mutually supportive trade and environmental policies, and contribute to addressing our shared environmental challenges. In particular acknowledging the forerunner role that the CPTPP played on fisheries subsidies, we welcomed the adoption of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies in the WTO and call for its early entry into force and effective implementation. In 2023, Parties conferred on biodiversity conservation, circular economy, and climate change innovation recognising the role of trade policies in addressing climate change. We welcome the on-going cooperation and the implementation work of the Environment Committee in supporting its effective implementation of the Chapter.

We recognise the adverse impacts of climate change on Parties, including the trade and economic impact of extreme weather events. We highlight that the effective implementation of the CPTPP should contribute to addressing the unprecedented triple global crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution that are mutually reinforcing and intrinsically linked. The review of the Environment Chapter will enable Parties to assess the implementation, operation, and contribution of the trade and environment provisions in the CPTPP, and consider recommendations in light of the growing environmental challenges which are facing Parties today, including climate change.

We support ongoing efforts to ensure the CPTPP continues to advance the digital economy. This includes consideration of a study commissioned in 2022 examining the implementation of the E-commerce chapter by the Parties, which will serve as a useful reference point for Parties to consider how we can promote further work on this front. The Committee has also begun work to lay the foundation for consideration on how our existing laws and regulations could be further reviewed to facilitate digital trade. We note the importance of sharing best practices and promoting cooperation on digital trade, including the facilitation of data flows and interoperability of our systems, so that the benefits of the digital economy can be realised for all.

Given the importance of efficient trade, we have decided to establish an ad-hoc working group under Chapter 5 (**Customs Administration and Trade Facilitation)** of the CPTPP which will meet as required to deliver on the 2023 work programme. The working

group will be focused on reducing transaction costs for businesses operating under the CPTPP, including working towards the effective implementation of Chapter 5.

We look forward to progressing the third-year general review as per Article 27.2.1(b) of the CPTPP. The review process is integral to sustaining the continuing relevance of the Agreement and ensuring it remains the "gold standard" for trade agreements. We acknowledge the need for the rules and disciplines in the Agreement to keep pace with the changing global landscape to ensure the CPTPP remains at the forefront of global trading arrangements for ambition and scope.

A priority of the review is to support maximum utilisation of the CPTPP and improving the uptake of the Agreement, particularly by small and medium enterprises. Ensuring the Agreement delivers trade outcomes that support women, Indigenous economic empowerment and sustainable environmental practices is vital to ongoing public support for the CPTPP.

Maiea Hiwa-i-te-rangi **– Rise up Hiwa-i-te-rangi** The role of the star Hiwa-i-te-rangi is to shine bright and provide motivation to move forward.

We welcome the United Kingdom as the first economy to accede to the CPTPP through a robust process which has ensured that the high standards of the CPTPP are maintained.

We have approved the terms and conditions for the UK's accession to the CPTPP as submitted by the Accession Working Group. On this occasion, we are pleased to have signed the UK's Accession Protocol in Auckland and Bandar Seri Begawan today.

As a G7 Member, the world's sixth-largest economy, and an economy committed to high standards and rules-based trade, we are heartened by the UK's entry into the CPTPP, which will significantly benefit the Membership. Likewise, we note that the UK also stands to benefit from becoming further integrated into one of the most dynamic trading areas in the world and gaining access to a trade bloc comprising nearly 12% (for 2022) of global gross domestic product and populated by more than half a billion people.

Like the stars of Matariki, the UK's accession will illuminate the path for others, foreshadowing our hopes for future growth.

We note the continued and growing interest from economies to join the CPTPP, which demonstrates the strength and value of the Agreement. Acknowledging that there are six further accession requests, we recognise the importance of an accession process that ensures the Agreement remains dynamic and living.

We reaffirm that the CPTPP is open to accession requests by economies that are ready to meet the high standards of the Agreement and with a demonstrated pattern of complying with their trade commitments, so that the benefits to the CPTPP membership can continue to grow through the accession process.

We acknowledge that learning from the UK's accession process and the experience gained will be integral to developing an accession process that is efficient, fair, high quality, and attractive to aspirant economies. In this regard, we will continue to discuss how to move forward collectively on accession processes in a way that reflects all our interests and maintains the high standards of the Agreement.

The Membership is currently undertaking an information-gathering process on whether aspirant economies can meet the CPTPP's high standards, taking into account their experience on their trade commitments.

We reaffirm that the information collected will not prejudge any process, outcome, decision and/or actions to be taken by CPTPP Members, including the commencement of an aspirant economy's accession process.

We have been briefed on the outcome from the Indigenous trade conference held in Waikato on 28-29 June. New Zealand as host has regularly reported to stakeholders as part of its commitment to ensuring greater transparency and strengthening public support for global trade.

The next CPTPP Commission meeting will take place in Canada in 2024.

Mānawa maiea te putanga o Matariki, Mānawa maiea te ariki o te rangi, Mānawa maiea te Mātahi o te Tau. Whano, whano, Haramai te toki ata huakirangi, Haumi e, Hui e, Tāiki e! – Celebrate the rising of Matariki, Celebrate the lord of the skies, Celebrate the new year, Unite, unite and bring forth the dawn, Together, in union, we are one!