Joint Press Release of the Second Future of Investment and Trade (FIT) Partnership Ministerial Meeting – July 2026 Auckland, New Zealand

The second Future of Investment and Trade (FIT) Partnership Ministerial Meeting was held in Auckland, New Zealand 17 July. This meeting follows the inaugural FIT Partnership Ministerial meeting in Singapore in November 2025.

The Meeting brought together Ministers and Representatives from the FIT Partnership, a grouping of small and medium sized, trade-dependent countries, all committed to open and fair trade.

To this end, Ministers agreed on a forward-looking set of outcomes to strengthen economic resilience, accelerate digital trade, reduce barriers, and advance practical cooperation:

- 13 Ministers from Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Rwanda, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, and Uruguay, issued a Ministerial Declaration on Promoting Economic Resilience to Address Economic Security Risks, underscoring their shared commitment to strengthening resilience while preserving open markets and avoiding unnecessary restrictions on trade;

- 14 Ministers from Chile, Costa Rica, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Rwanda, Singapore, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates and Uruguay, issued a Ministerial Declaration on Facilitating the Digitisation of Trade Processes and Documents, with a focus on encouraging the adoption of international standards and interoperable systems to make trade faster, simpler, and more secure;

- 8 Ministers from Chile, Costa Rica, New Zealand, Paraguay, Peru, Rwanda, Singapore, and Uruguay joined a Plurilateral Arrangement relating to Cooperation on Non-tariff Barriers (NTBs), providing a framework for Members to take practical steps to tackle trade barriers and strengthen our trading positions;

- Ministers agreed on future work of the FIT Partnership, notably on addressing contemporary subsidies issues, on strengthening the transparency, predictability and fairness of the rules-based trading system and building on the ongoing work on supply chain resilience to advance practical and concrete cooperation.

During the Auckland meeting, the FIT Partnership welcomed new Member countries Korea, Peru and Thailand, bringing the total membership to 19 countries[1]. This growing membership reflects the interest generated by the FIT Partnership and its positive trade agenda which supports economies to navigate uncertainty while remaining open and connected.

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[1] Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Costa Rica, Iceland, Korea, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Rwanda, Singapore, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, and Uruguay

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FIT Partnership Ministers were joined by counterparts from Fiji and Samoa as New Zealand's guests from the Pacific region for this second Ministerial meeting.

Alongside these Auckland outcomes, FIT Partnership Ministers and Representatives committed to maintaining strong momentum through its action-oriented agenda. They emphasised the importance of the FIT Partnership in having real world impact by closely engaging relevant stakeholders. With this in mind, Ministers engaged with a number of New Zealand business leaders, including through a panel discussion, as representatives of this key stakeholder group.

New Zealand acknowledged the United Arab Emirates for taking on the role of Coordinating Chair of the FIT Partnership later in the year, with the third FIT Partnership Ministerial Meeting planned for early 2027 in the United Arab Emirates.

END

Annex A – Photo of the Second FIT Partnership Ministerial Meeting
Annex B – Ministerial Declaration on Promoting Economic Resilience to Address Economic Security Risks
Annex C – Ministerial Declaration on Facilitating the Digitisation of Trade Processes and Documents
Annex D – Plurilateral Arrangement relating to Cooperation on Non-tariff Barriers (NTBs)

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ANNEX A

Photo of the Second FIT Partnership Ministerial Meeting

Caption: Representatives from the participating countries at the second Future of Investment and Trade (FIT) Partnership Ministerial Meeting in Auckland, New Zealand on 17 July 2026.

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ANNEX B

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

PROMOTING ECONOMIC RESILIENCE TO ADDRESS ECONOMIC SECURITY RISKS

DESIRING to enhance cooperation and mutual support on economic security matters;

NOTING that ensuring the resilience and security of critical supply chains, ensuring a level playing field and addressing economic coercion via coordination, cooperation and other means that are consistent with the Participants' international obligations can contribute to their economic security;

RECOGNISING that strengthening the Participants' development of local economies and participation in global and regional value chains contributes to enhancing the resilience of supply chains and hence contributes to improving and strengthening economic security;

AFFIRMING that open markets, a strong rules-based multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization ("WTO") at its core, including compliance with those rules, as drivers of economic stability and predictability, and legal certainty are paramount to the Participants' respective and common economic security;

RECALLING the objectives and contents set out in the FITP Ministerial Declaration *Supply Chain Resilience: Best Practices in Response to Majors Supply Chain Risks and Disruptions* and noting the FITP Ministerial Declaration *Strengthening the Rules-based Trading System*;

AFFIRMING their intent to maintain open, diversified, secure, transparent, efficient, and resilient supply chains;

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of refraining from adopting unnecessary trade-restrictive measures including export restrictions, tariffs and non-tariff barriers;

RECOGNISING that a strong and reliable rules-based trading system contributes to promoting a level playing field;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that inclusive, transparent and urgent reform of the WTO with a view to strengthening all its functions will contribute to a fairer global trading environment.

I. General Provisions

1. For the purposes of this Declaration:

    a) *Participant* means a country whose Minister has endorsed this declaration;

    b) "Critical good" means a product, input, or resource whose sustained availability a Participant deems necessary for the functioning and stability of its economy, public services or national security, and for which disruptions would pose severe and systemic risks or harm; and

    c) "Critical sector" means an economic sector whose continuous operation a Participant deems indispensable for the functioning and stability of its economy, public services, or national security.

2. The Participants affirm their objective to enhance cooperation and mutual support on economic security matters, including on securing global value and supply chains and strengthening supply chain resilience in critical sectors, promoting a level playing field and refraining from using economic and trade policy instruments as means of economic coercion.

3. To that purpose, the Participants intend to create opportunities for consultations to exchange views on economic security related issues, including to deepen their respective understanding of economic security, anticipate, identify and mitigate economic security risks.

4. Such consultations may be organised by a Participant by submitting a request to the FITP supply chain national contact points established pursuant to the FITP Ministerial Declaration *Supply Chain Resilience: Best Practices in Response to Majors Supply Chain Risks and Disruptions*.[1]

5. The Participants may, if they deem it necessary, involve businesses and other relevant stakeholders to such consultations where appropriate, to facilitate cooperation and coordination on economic security approaches in an effort to mitigate negative effects and address root causes of economic security concerns.

6. Where a Participant considers adopting or maintaining trade-restrictive measures to address economic security concerns that may have significant impact on the trade of critical goods with other Participants, it intends to inform the other Participants in advance or as early as practicable.

7. Each Participant intends to ensure that measures to address economic security concerns are applied in accordance with its international obligations, in a way that least affects trade with and between the other Participants.

8. The Participants intend to expand their cooperation on measures to address economic security concerns in relevant international fora.

[1] If a Participant to this declaration is not a participant to the FITP Ministerial Declaration *Supply Chain Resilience: Best Practices in Response to Majors Supply Chain Risks and Disruptions*, this Participant intends to nominate a national contact point, whose contact details will be recorded and added in the FITP list of supply chain national contact points.

9. The Participants confirm that cooperation under this declaration is voluntary and subject to the domestic laws, regulations, policies, priorities and respective international obligations of each Participant.

II. Strengthening Supply Chain Resilience and Security: Keeping Markets Open

10. The Participants acknowledge the need for open, diversified, secure, transparent, efficient and resilient supply chains to enhance their respective economic security.

11. The Participants intend to use the consultation mechanisms set out in Paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 of this declaration to identify critical goods and/or sectors of shared interest, with a view to determining priority areas for cooperation to strengthen economic security and supply chain resilience, as appropriate.

12. The Participants intend to work cooperatively in relevant international fora on initiatives that aim at strengthening supply chain resilience, including those that aim at enhancing supply chain transparency to better identify and anticipate risks and vulnerabilities.

13. In order to maintain certainty and improve market openness for critical goods and promote secure, predictable, resilient and open critical supply chains, the Participants endeavour to:

a) refrain from applying arbitrary or unnecessary restrictions on exports of critical goods, including export prohibitions, export duties, or export licences;

b) reduce or eliminate existing customs duties and non-tariff barriers on the import of critical goods, consistent with their respective international obligations; and

c) refrain from applying new customs duties and non-tariff barriers on imports and exports of critical goods.

14. The Participants intend to promote the use and dissemination of relevant international standards to facilitate cross-border flows of critical goods and support open, diversified, secure, transparent, efficient and resilient supply chains.

III. Ensuring a Level Playing Field

15. The Participants intend to explore opportunities to exchange views on addressing noncompliance with international trade commitments, and on strengthening transparency and the observance of notification requirements under international trade agreements.

16. The Participants intend to cooperate in relevant international fora to:

a) enhance transparency of industrial policies and trade distorting practices; and

b) examine trade distortions arising from industrial policies, to better understand and address related concerns.

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IV. Economic Coercion

17. The Participants reaffirm their shared concerns with and opposition to economic coercion, including through practices that seek to exploit economic vulnerabilities and dependencies.

18. The Participants reaffirm the need to deter economic coercion and mitigate its risks by enhancing global cooperation and mutual support.

19. The Participants reaffirm the key role of the rules-based multilateral trading system, with the WTO at its core, as a tool to counter economic coercion.

V. Legal Status

20. The Participants confirm that this declaration does not create legal rights or obligations under international law.

Endorsed by the Ministers and Representatives for trade of the following countries on 17 July 2026: Brunei Darussalam, Chile; Costa Rica; Iceland; Liechtenstein; Malaysia; New Zealand; Norway; Rwanda; Singapore; Switzerland; United Arab Emirates; Uruguay.

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ANNEX C

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

FACILITATING THE DIGITALISATION OF TRADE PROCESSES AND DOCUMENTS

RECOGNISING the transformative potential of digital technologies to streamline trade processes, reduce trade costs, and create new opportunities for our people and businesses, particularly micro, small and medium enterprises;

NOTING that paper-based processes in cross-border transactions can create unnecessary costs and friction;

AFFIRMING our shared objective to foster an open, predictable and interoperable digital trade environment that supports increased productivity and inclusive economic growth;

AFFIRMING the importance of interoperability of digital systems in enabling seamless cross- border transactions, and the role of international standards in facilitating interoperability;

ACKNOWLEDGING the work that has come before, including in the World Trade Organization, World Customs Organization, and the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business and underlining our commitment to building upon this foundation;

RECOGNISING the integral role played by the private sector, including international business organisations in promoting global best practices, advancing interoperable standards, and supporting the transition toward fully digital systems;

RECALLING the establishment of the FIT Partnership as a platform that fosters collaboration between governments and the private sector to incubate solutions and develop practical initiatives to facilitate global trade and investment;

DETERMINED to work closely to identify barriers relating to trade in the digital economy and to facilitate trade through digitalisation.

Declare:

1. We affirm our shared objective to accelerate progress toward the end-to-end digitalisation of trade documents and processes to benefit our businesses and wider economies.

2. We take note of the adoption of legal frameworks that enable electronic transactions, including the exchange of electronic bills of lading and other transferable records.

3. In this regard, we welcome initiatives to explore how countries could maintain or establish domestic legal frameworks that are consistent with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records (2017), including the principle of functional equivalence, as the recognised international standard, while recognising that each Participant has its own domestic context and may achieve these objectives through different legal and technological approaches.

4. We intend to strengthen engagement with industry stakeholders, including international business organisations on digitalising trade documents and processes, through structured, transparent, and mutually beneficial public-private collaboration across the FIT Partnership.

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5. In our respective domestic contexts, each Participant intends to engage regularly with industry stakeholders such as technology providers, financial institutions, logistics companies, and other relevant actors to ensure that digital trade facilitation measures are informed by practical experience and operational realities.

6. We encourage the development, adoption, and use of interoperable systems to support the exchange of data relating to trade administration documents and electronic records used in commercial trading activities. To this end, we recognise the role of international and, if available, open standards in the development and governance of these systems.

7. We intend to advance, through continued cooperation within the FIT Partnership, a digital trade facilitation forward work programme that includes:

    a) Partnering with each other on pilot projects, including trialling exchanges between Participants of electronic records used in commercial trading activities, such as electronic bills of lading, electronic bills of exchange, electronic promissory notes, and electronic certificates of origin, with a view to scaling these pilots up, including through public-private collaboration;

    b) Sharing of information, national experiences and best practices in advancing paperless trade, including in relation to adopting or aligning domestic rules with the UNCITRAL Model Law on Electronic Transferable Records in our domestic contexts and identifying common challenges to facilitate regulatory interoperability; and

    c) Continuing to collaborate in international fora to make practical and pragmatic progress on digital trade facilitation.

8. We intend to review progress at future Ministerial meetings and continue to push forward joint efforts to unlock the full potential of digital trade facilitation for increased productivity and inclusive growth.

Endorsed by the Ministers and Representatives responsible for trade of the following countries on 17 July 2026: Chile; Costa Rica; Iceland; Liechtenstein; Malaysia; New Zealand; Norway; Paraguay; Peru; Rwanda; Singapore; Switzerland; United Arab Emirates; Uruguay.

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ANNEX D

Plurilateral Arrangement
Relating to Cooperation on
Non-Tariff Barriers

The Participants to this Arrangement (referred hereinafter as "the Participants"):

DESIRING to develop and enhance their cooperation on addressing non-tariff barriers ("NTBs");

RECOGNISING the significant and negative impact that NTBs have on the ability of businesses to access export markets, thus constraining trade;

ACKNOWLEDGING also that each NTB is different in scope and effect, and there is no one-size-fits-all approach to addressing them;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that gender-responsive policies and practices are important when addressing barriers to trade and advancing women's economic empowerment;

RECALLING the Participants' rights and obligations under the Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization and its Annexes ("WTO Agreements");

REAFFIRMING the Participants' commitment to protecting and developing the rules-based multilateral trading system, which underpins fair and open trade;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that closer collaboration can support common benefits for the businesses and people of the Participants' economies as part of a progressive and inclusive system of trade;

AIMING to enhance the existing level of cooperation where the Participants have common interests in addressing non-tariff barriers.

Have reached the following understanding:

PARAGRAPH 1
OBJECTIVES

1. The objectives of this Arrangement are to:

   a) establish a framework for cooperation among the Participants in addressing NTBs of shared concern affecting their exporters;

   b) establish a platform for constructive engagement and information sharing among the Participants;

   c) provide a platform for information and experience sharing among the Participants on the effectiveness of respective approaches to addressing NTBs, as well as engagement with businesses and other relevant stakeholders on NTBs; and

   d) communicate a shared commitment to the rules-based trading system, open trade, and the centrality of the World Trade Organization.

2. This Arrangement does not create legal rights or obligations under international law.

PARAGRAPH 2
SCOPE OF COOPERATION

1. For the purpose of this Arrangement, NTBs are:

    a) a subset of non-tariff measures that Participants consider to block, restrict or distort trade in goods for protectionist reasons or in a manner that is discriminatory or that is inconsistent with the WTO Agreements; and

    b) are limited to measures within the scope of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade or measures within the scope of the WTO Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

2. The Participants will foster enhanced cooperation to support the resolution of NTBs of mutual interest. Cooperation can be in the following areas:

    Addressing non-tariff barriers

    a) Each Participant will identify and prepare a list of relevant NTBs imposed by WTO Members. The NTBs identified by the Participants will be collated into a consolidated list of identified NTBs ("Consolidated List") by the New Zealand Contact Point[1]. The list provided by each Participant should contain no more than 30 NTBs.

    b) On an annual basis, or more frequently as necessary, the Participants will jointly consider the consolidated list and select those that are shared priorities to be addressed. These discussions may be held over virtual means.

    c) Where an NTB is identified as a priority for at least three (3) Participants, those Participants or subsequently interested Participants will cooperate to address that NTB.

    d) Notwithstanding sub-Paragraphs 2(2)(a)-2(2)(c), a Participant may raise an NTB of concern affecting its exporters for the consideration of other Participants at any time, with a view to identifying possible synergies or cooperative approaches to address the NTB with other interested Participants.

    Other areas of cooperation

3. The Participants may also share their experiences and knowledge, including in the following areas:

    a) how their respective business communities are supported to identify and raise NTBs with their government;

    b) the systems and approaches to identifying, tracking and resolving NTBs; and

    c) the effectiveness of different mechanisms aimed at reducing NTBs.

4. The Participants may establish terms of reference for the exchange of information referred to in Paragraph 2(3).

[1] The collation of the consolidated list may be conducted by other Participants, if jointly decided.

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PARAGRAPH 3
FORMS OF COOPERATION

1. The Participants that are cooperating to address an NTB will jointly decide on the appropriate approach to be undertaken for that NTB. The form of cooperation may include, but is not limited to:

   a) joint informal dialogue with or representations to the government of the WTO Member that is imposing the NTB;

   b) greater coordination between the Participants in the multilateral, plurilateral and regional trade architecture in targeting the NTB;

   c) utilising relevant mechanisms within the WTO Agreements and relevant free trade agreements, to address the NTB; and

   d) any other strategic approach as may be decided by the Participants.

PARAGRAPH 4
REVIEW OF SCOPE OF COOPERATION

1. The Participants will initiate a review of the scope of cooperation as set out in Paragraph 2, following two (2) years of the entry into effect of this Arrangement with a view to concluding the review within twelve (12) months. The review will include consideration of expansion of the scope of NTBs.

PARAGRAPH 5
IMPLEMENTATION

1. The Participants will carry out the cooperation provided for in this Arrangement in a manner consistent with the WTO Agreements, other relevant free trade agreements and their respective national laws, rules, regulations and policies.

2. The Participants anticipate there will be an initial period of confidence building, during which the Participants focus on the "Other areas of cooperation" described in Paragraph 2(3) before undertaking the actions set out in Paragraph 2(2). Participants will commence the actions outlined in Paragraph 2(2)(a) within twelve (12) months of entry into effect of this Arrangement.

3. The cooperative activities provided for in this Arrangement will be carried out subject to the Participants' available resources.

4. The Participants may meet at agreed times to follow up on the progress of addressing the Consolidated List of NTBs and to provide updates on the forms of cooperation. Meetings may be held in person, via teleconference, videoconference, or any other means as agreed by the Participants.

PARAGRAPH 6
EFFECTIVE DATE

1. This Arrangement will enter into effect on the date on which the New Zealand Contact Point has received the written notification of at least eight WTO Members which have indicated their intention to participate in this Arrangement.

PARAGRAPH 7
TERMINATION OF PARTICIPATION

1. A Participant may terminate its participation from this Arrangement by providing written notice to the other Participants via their designated Contact Points.

PARAGRAPH 8
AMENDMENTS

1. This Arrangement may be amended by consensus decision by the Participants.

PARAGRAPH 9
NEW PARTICIPANTS

1. Application to join this Arrangement through an expression of interest will be open to any WTO Member interested in cooperation on addressing NTBs in line with the objectives of this Arrangement.

2. The WTO Member may then notify the New Zealand Contact Point, in writing, of its request to join this Arrangement.

3. Expressions of interest from any WTO Members to join this Arrangement will be considered by the Participants collectively via their designated Contact Points.

4. A decision to accept a WTO Member’s request to join this Arrangement will be taken jointly between the Participants, and the WTO Member will be informed.

5. This Arrangement will enter into effect for that WTO Member on the date of written confirmation from the New Zealand Contact Point.

PARAGRAPH 10
CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

1. Nothing in this Arrangement will be construed as requiring a Participant to disclose, furnish, or provide access to confidential information, or any other information where such disclosure of that information is contrary to its public interest.

2. If a Participant provides information in relation to this Arrangement to another Participant and designates the information as confidential, any receiving Participant will maintain the confidentiality of the information, including in the event that it terminates its participation in this Arrangement.

PARAGRAPH 11
CONTACT POINTS

1. Each Participant will designate a contact point that will be responsible for coordination and facilitation of the cooperation activities under this Arrangement (“Contact Point”).

2. A document providing contact details of the Contact Point for each Participant (List of Contact Points) will be maintained separately and will not form part of this Arrangement.