Joint Press Release on the successful accession of Costa Rica to the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement

Photo caption: (L-R) Then-Minister for Trade Yeo Han-Koo (Republic of Korea), Minister of Foreign Trade Indiana Trejos (Costa Rica), Minister for Trade and Investment Todd McClay (New Zealand), Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry (Trade) Gan Kim Yong (Singapore) and Undersecretary for International Economic Relations Paula Estévez (Chile), pictured during the presentation of Costa Rica's Instrument of Accession in Auckland, New Zealand.

1. Chile, New Zealand, Singapore and the Republic of Korea, Parties to the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA), are pleased to welcome Costa Rica as the DEPA's fifth Party, and the second member to accede to the agreement. Parties met on the sidelines of the Future of Investment and Trade Partnership meeting in Auckland, New Zealand for the presentation of Costa Rica's Instrument of Accession.

Finalisation of Costa Rica's Accession Process

2. Costa Rica's successful accession represents a meaningful milestone, demonstrating the growing global interest in high-quality digital trade rules and cooperation. It follows the announcement of the substantive conclusion of discussions on Costa Rica's accession in January 2025 and the subsequent completion of all legal procedures, in line with the DEPA accession process.

3. The DEPA commits Parties to ambitious disciplines on digital trade to advance the growth of an inclusive, innovative, and rules-based digital economy. It also provides a platform for collaboration on projects of mutual interest. The accession of Costa Rica is

testament to the Agreement's open and inclusive nature. The expansion of DEPA to include Costa Rica, an economy which meets all of the Agreement's high standards, will strengthen the Agreement and provide Parties with greater opportunities to collaborate on digital economy initiatives.

Comments from DEPA Parties

4. Chile's Undersecretary for International Economic Relations Ms. Paula Estévez said, "Chile welcomes Costa Rica as the fifth Party to the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement. Costa Rica's accession marks a milestone for DEPA and reflects the growing momentum behind international cooperation in the field of digital trade. We are particularly pleased to welcome another Latin American country to the Agreement, as its participation represents a valuable opportunity to strengthen digital integration across our region, foster new opportunities for businesses and entrepreneurs, and deepen cooperation in the digital economy."

5. New Zealand Minister for Trade and Investment Hon Todd McClay said, "The Digital Economy Partnership Agreement is groundbreaking in its scope and world leading in the ambition of its digital trade rules. That it is able to attract economies like the Republic of Korea and now Costa Rica, who meet its high standards and commit to upholding them, is testament to DEPA's value as a pathfinder. New Zealand is delighted to welcome Costa Rica into the DEPA and looks forward to the opportunities this milestone brings to deepen our digital trade relationship, and to enhance cooperation to support businesses engaged in the digital economy."

6. Singapore's Minister for Sustainability and the Environment and Minister-in charge of Trade Relations Ms. Grace Fu said, "Singapore warmly welcomes Costa Rica as the fifth Party to the DEPA. This continues our momentum to keep the DEPA as an open and inclusive Agreement to all economies that are able to meet its high standards. I look forward to deepening Singapore's collaborations on the digital economy with Costa Rica."

7. The Republic of Korea's Minister for Trade Jung Sung Park said, "The DEPA is a 'living document' that continues to enhance its rules, deepen cooperation among its members, and grow to include more economies in response to the rapidly changing digital environment. In this sense, Costa Rica's accession is significant as it expands participation in the DEPA and strengthens its capacity to respond meaningfully to these changes. Korea will continue to work with Costa Rica and other DEPA Parties to harness the full potential of innovation in the evolving digital economy."

8. Costa Rica's Minister for Foreign Trade Indiana Trejos said, "For Costa Rica, becoming the fifth Party to the DEPA marks an important milestone and reaffirms our commitment to advancing an open, innovative, and inclusive digital economy. We look forward to actively contributing to the DEPA and working closely with our partners to strengthen digital trade and deepen cooperation. Together, we aim to ensure that our businesses are well positioned to seize the opportunities created by the digital transformation, while fostering

sustainable economic growth and creating new opportunities for businesses and our people.”

Background

9. Chile, New Zealand and Singapore signed the DEPA in June 2020, with the Republic of Korea acceding to the DEPA in May 2024 as the first new member. Costa Rica formally requested accession on 23 December 2022, and an Accession Working Group (AWG) to assess this request was established on 6 October 2023, with New Zealand as Chair.

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