

CPTPP-ASEAN Trade and Investment Dialogue Joint Ministerial Statement

Joint Ministerial Statement on the occasion of the inaugural Trade and Investment Dialogue between the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

1. We, Ministers and Representatives of the Parties to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), held the inaugural CPTPP-ASEAN Trade and Investment Dialogue in Naarm/Melbourne, and virtually, on 20 November 2025 (Dialogue).

2. We reaffirm our support for ASEAN centrality in the ASEAN-led architecture, and implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which is based on the principles of sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, non-interference, consensus and unity in diversity. In line with the ASEAN Community Vision 2045 and the ASEAN Economic Community Strategic Plan 2026-2030, we welcomed ASEAN's continued efforts to build a highly integrated and cohesive economy, as well as a competitive, innovative, and dynamic region that enables seamless trade and investment across and beyond Southeast Asia.

3. At the inaugural Dialogue, we reached a shared understanding that:

- a) Free, fair and open markets and rules-based trade have contributed to our prosperity and remain essential to our future economic growth and security;
- b) We will continue to uphold and implement commitments under existing multilateral, regional and bilateral trade agreements, including with regard to the settlement of any trade disputes;
- c) Rules and changes to rules that govern trade and investment should be transparent and predictable. Equally, our measures that impact trade and investment should be implemented in a transparent manner consistent with existing rules governing trade and investment;
- d) We will continue to work towards ensuring that economic growth is sustainable and that all our communities benefit from increased trade and investment;
- e) We reaffirm the importance of strengthening our resilience and competitiveness by strengthening global value and critical supply chains, fostering sustainable growth and deepening our understanding of vulnerabilities;
- f) We share concerns about market distorting practices, which distort trade and investment flows, affect resilient supply chains, and cause excess capacity. We also share concerns about economic coercion that seeks to exploit economic vulnerabilities and dependencies; and

- g) Recognising the increasing importance of data to the digital economy, we will continue our cooperation on facilitating the flow of data, and strengthening business and consumer trust in digital transactions.

4. Acknowledging that the Dialogue took place during a challenging time for the global trading system, we underscored our commitment to strengthening the rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, free and fair, inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and transparent multilateral trading system with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core.

- We expressed our shared commitment to support work underway in Geneva to reform the WTO to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in addressing current and emerging trade challenges including practices which distort trade and investment flows.
- We recognise the positive role of plurilateral negotiations at the WTO, including the Joint Statement Initiatives, as means to advance issues of interest, foster new ideas and approaches, and build momentum towards multilateral agreement of new rules.
- We underscored our efforts to the incorporation of the Agreement on Electronic Commerce into the WTO legal framework and to bringing the Agreement into force. We noted the importance of ongoing multilateral and plurilateral discussions in promoting open, inclusive, and secure digital trade, including ASEAN's ongoing negotiations for a Digital Economy Framework Agreement (DEFA). We reaffirmed our commitment to the moratorium on customs duties on electronic transmissions, which has underpinned the growth of the digital economy for the past 27 years, and called on all WTO Members to work towards a long-term solution that ensures certainty and sustains the continued growth of the digital economy.
- We underscored our efforts to the incorporation of the Investment Facilitation for Development Agreement into the WTO legal framework and to bringing the Agreement into force and recognised its potential to improve the transparency and predictability of investment frameworks, streamline administrative procedures and support sustainable development.
- We acknowledged the need to ensure WTO rules are up-to-date and enforceable, including by improving WTO decision-making processes, and reaffirmed our commitment to having a fully and well-functioning dispute settlement system that is accessible to all WTO Members. We affirmed the importance of resolving disputes definitively while we work to reform the system and to encourage greater participation in the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA).

- We offer our collective support to the Republic of Cameroon to host a successful 14th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC14) and remain committed to working collaboratively with all WTO Members to achieve positive outcomes.

5. Affirming our shared commitment to upholding fair and open trade that is transparent, predictable, and rules-based, the CPTPP-ASEAN shared understanding reflects the high standards of the CPTPP, as well as ASEAN's competitiveness and vibrancy as an integrated regional trading bloc. We recognise the importance of the CPTPP-ASEAN shared understanding in supporting sustainable growth, regional integration, fostering a predictable trading environment and advancing cooperation in the digital economy.

6. In order to further enhance the multilateral trading system, as well as to strengthen cooperation between the CPTPP Parties and ASEAN Member States, the Dialogue provided an opportunity for participants to explore tangible areas of cooperation, including:

- **Trade and Investment Facilitation:** We discussed strategies on advancing trade and investment facilitation, including enhancing transparency and addressing non-tariff barriers. We acknowledged ongoing efforts within the CPTPP and ASEAN to reduce transaction costs and promote a predictable business environment in goods and services.
- **Digital Trade:** We discussed the growing significance of digital trade in the global economy and the importance of digital trade rules to lower barriers to trade, improve trade efficiencies and facilitate access to markets. We recognised the potential for continued engagement and remain open to working together on digital trade.
- **Supply Chain Resilience:** We recognised the importance of resilient and reliable critical supply chains, and exchanged experiences on policies and practices that support greater transparency, diversification, security, sustainability, trustworthiness and reliability in building and strengthening those supply chains. We shared perspectives on emerging trends and the need to enhance preparedness in the face of future disruptions.
- **Regulatory Coherence:** We acknowledged the benefits of promoting greater regulatory cooperation and coherence to reduce trade frictions and facilitate business engagement.

7. We welcomed the successful convening of the inaugural Dialogue and decided to continue our constructive and forward-looking engagement at both ministerial and senior official levels. We decided to explore, where appropriate, potential areas for ongoing and practical cooperation.

8. We have hence instructed Senior Officials from CPTPP Parties and ASEAN Member States to plan towards our next Dialogue, to be held in 2026. We also committed to intensify our ongoing cooperation on necessary WTO reform and rulemaking in the lead up to MC14.