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## **The United States and Colombia Meet to Review Implementation of the United States - Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement**

*Washington, D.C.* – On Thursday, August 2, 2018, officials from the United States and Colombia held the second meeting of the United States – Colombia Free Trade Commission (the “Commission” or the “FTC”). The Commission is responsible for overseeing implementation and further elaboration of the United States – Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (the “Agreement” or the CTPA).

At this second FTC meeting, the officials reviewed the trade and economic impact of the Agreement on both countries since the previous Commission meeting held in November 2012, in Washington, D.C. Both sides noted that the bilateral trade relationship has continued to strengthen during the six years the Agreement has been in force, that both sides have worked together constructively to resolve issues when they arise, and that implementation is proceeding well and smoothly.

Officials underscored the importance of ensuring the effective implementation of the Agreement in both countries, and the key role the Agreement plays in facilitating sustainable, broad-based economic growth and as an important catalyst in facilitating competitiveness. Officials also agreed to continue to work together to ensure effective implementation of, and compliance with, the trade in goods and services, customs, intellectual property rights, labor, and environment obligations of the Agreement.

A discussion of bilateral issues of concern included Intellectual Property, digital trade and telecommunications, services, agriculture-related issues, textile and apparel concerns, truck scrappage, and how better use can be made of the CTPA by certain sectors.

The two governments reviewed the important ongoing engagement on labor issues, an area in which the Colombian government has made progress addressing the issues identified in the 2017 Public Report of Review of U.S. Submission 2016-02 (Colombia). Officials noted that work remains and that both sides will continue to work together on the pending issues identified in the 2017 Report.

Both sides recognized the importance of transparency and maintaining communication with stakeholders. Further, the countries committed to continue to promote an open dialogue and use mechanisms for receiving meaningful public comment, as part of a commitment to public engagement.

The United States looks forward to continuing a constructive and open engagement with Colombia to implement the CTPA to the benefit of both countries under the administration of incoming President Iván Duque.

The meeting was led by Ambassador C.J. Mahoney, Deputy United States Trade Representative, for the United States and Vice Minister Olga Lucía Lozano, of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Tourism, for Colombia.