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Trilateral Statement on the Conclusion of the Fourth Round of NAFTA Negotiations

October 17, 2017 – Ottawa, Ontario

Today, United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Chrystia Freeland, and Mexican Secretary of the Economy Ildefonso Guajardo successfully concluded the fourth round of the renegotiation and modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The round took place in Arlington, Virginia, from October 11-17, 2017, covering seven full days of discussions in nearly 30 groups.

Building on the progress made in prior rounds, the United States, Canada, and Mexico have now substantively completed discussions in the Chapter on Competition.

Additionally, negotiators made progress in several other negotiating groups, including customs and trade facilitation, digital trade, good regulatory practices, and certain sectoral annexes.

Parties have now put forward substantially all initial text proposals. New proposals have created challenges and Ministers discussed the significant conceptual gaps among the Parties. Ministers have called upon all negotiators to explore creative ways to bridge these gaps. To that end, the Parties plan on having a longer intersessional period before the next negotiating round to assess all proposals. Mexico will host the fifth round of talks in Mexico City from November 17-21, 2017. Additional negotiating rounds will be scheduled through the first quarter of 2018.

NAFTA partners are working hard to ensure the new agreement provides a solid framework to create jobs, economic growth and opportunity for the people of North America. Ministers have reaffirmed their mandate to Chief Negotiators to reach an agreement in a reasonable period of time. Negotiators will continue intersessional engagement, as well as intensive consultations with their respective stakeholders.