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Joint Press Statement TPP Ministerial Meeting Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

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Brunei, Darussalam – The ministers of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) countries have met jointly and bilaterally on August 22 and 23, 2013 to consider how to address key outstanding issues as negotiations toward a comprehensive, high-standard regional trade and investment agreement enter the final stage.

Noting that the majority of issues are now at an advanced stage, the 12 countries – Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Canada, Chile, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, United States, and Vietnam - have explored how to develop a mutually-acceptable package, including possible landing zones on remaining sensitive and challenging issues and sequencing of issues in the final talks. Particular areas of focus have included matters related to market access for goods, services/investment, financial services, and government procurement as well as the texts covering intellectual property, competition, and environmental issues. We also discussed the remaining outstanding issues on labor, dispute settlement, and other areas.

This meeting of TPP Ministers has taken place as the 19th round of TPP negotiations gets underway in order to offer guidance to negotiators and help drive the negotiations to conclusion on the 2013 timeframe instructed by our Leaders. We discussed how best to achieve an outcome consistent with our common goal of achieving an ambitious and balanced 21st-century agreement that will enhance trade and investment among us, promote innovation, economic growth and development, and support the creation and retention of jobs in our countries.

We have agreed to maintain our active engagement in the lead-up to the APEC Leaders meeting in Bali, Indonesia, on the margins of which TPP Leaders are expected to meet as they have in past years. This meeting will be an important milestone as the 12 countries work intensively to conclude this landmark agreement.

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