

United States, Mexico and Canada Joint Statement of the Third Meeting of the USMCA/T-MEC/CUSMA Free Trade Commission

July 13, 2023

Following the third meeting of the USMCA/T-MEC/CUSMA (Agreement) Free Trade Commission (FTC) on July 7, 2023, United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai, Mexican Secretary of Economy Raquel Buenrostro, and Canadian Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng issued the following joint statement:

“Today, Mexico, the United States, and Canada held the third meeting of the T-MEC/USMCA/CUSMA FTC in Cancún, Quintana Roo, Mexico. Three years after the Agreement’s entry into force, it continues to strengthen a competitive and dynamic North America.”

The Ministers highlighted the importance of the Agreement as the foundational pillar of the North American economic relationship. The Ministers also underscored the importance of resolving disputes through the Agreement’s mechanisms to provide greater certainty, enhance competitiveness, and avoid unnecessary disruptions to trade.

During the meeting, the Ministers reviewed the progress made over the past year and took note of the readouts from Committees and Working Groups, including Trade in Goods, State-Owned Enterprises and Designated Monopolies, Environment, Agricultural Biotechnology, and Labor, among others. The Ministers offered guidance for future work and reiterated that ongoing engagement is critical to the Agreement’s full implementation. The Ministers also engaged in broader discussions on North American Competitiveness, SMEs and Inclusive Trade, and Labor.

North American Competitiveness

The Ministers reaffirmed their shared interest in enhancing regional competitiveness. They held a roundtable discussion with business delegations from all three countries to exchange ideas on economic integration and the role of the Agreement in this process. The Ministers discussed the important work to fulfill the terms of the T-MEC/USMCA/CUSMA FTC Decision Number 5, which entered into force in February 2023, including to coordinate North American efforts to maintain regional trade flows during emergency situations and develop a shared understanding of what constitutes critical infrastructure priorities.

The Ministers also recognized the recent trilateral workforce development events held throughout 2022 and 2023. Mexico hosted a virtual event on

workforce development certification and educational practices. Then, Canada hosted a hybrid event in Winnipeg, Manitoba regarding climate commitments and addressing opportunities for women, Indigenous Peoples, youth and other underrepresented groups. Most recently, the United States hosted an in-person event in Huntsville, Alabama that included meetings with representatives from regional Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), state and local governments, and industry. The Ministers instructed their respective teams to continue organizing additional workforce development programs in each country to exchange best practices and to explore regional and national solutions to workforce development challenges.

Based on Canada's proposal for the three countries to work together to enhance North America's competitiveness by building on each country's open and transparent investment environments, the Ministers encouraged each country to share best practices.

SMEs and Inclusive Trade

The Ministers reiterated their commitment to promote mechanisms to increase competitiveness and encourage the active participation of SMEs in international trade, especially for those SMEs led by groups that are traditionally underrepresented. The Ministers acknowledged the trilateral information-sharing session on inclusive trade organized by Canada in March for committee leads. In addition, the Ministers look forward to the 2nd USMCA SME Dialogue, which will be hosted by Mexico in September. The Ministers expressed interest in the SME Committee's upcoming activity, organized in partnership with Indigenous SMEs and organizations, to help facilitate Indigenous SMEs trade within the region, which will be hosted by Canada this fall.

Labor

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to uphold workers' rights as set forth in the Agreement, including freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. The Ministers discussed steps each country is taking to implement the Agreement's obligation to ban the importation of goods produced by forced labor. The Ministers also held a discussion with Mexican labor stakeholders to hear first-hand from workers in order to incorporate their voices into trade policy and to discuss opportunities that the Agreement offers to improve the standard of living of North American workers and to place them at the center of trade.

Next Steps

The T-MEC/USMCA/CUSMA Parties share a unique history and culture that emphasize innovation, equitable development, and mutually beneficial trade to create inclusive economic opportunities for the benefit of our peoples. The Agreement has an increasingly important role in strengthening the resilience of our economies. As we continue implementing our Agreement, the Parties reiterate that committees should continue to engage with underrepresented communities to ensure that the Agreement benefits those who have historically been left behind by trade. The Parties further agreed to hold a Deputies Meeting

before the end of this year to assess the progress on the areas highlighted today and identify ongoing opportunities for future engagement.

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