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## **Canada launches negotiations toward deepening its trade partnership with the Pacific Alliance**

October 22, 2017 - Ottawa, Ontario

Canada is a trading nation. Canadians' standard of living depends on robust international trade as a key driver of economic growth for a prosperous middle class. Canada's strong and rules-based system is recognized the world over, and the Government of Canada is focusing on the Americas and the Pacific region as an opportunity to further diversify its trade and create opportunities for Canadian businesses and families.

The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne, Minister of International Trade, welcomes the first round of free trade negotiations between Canada and the Pacific Alliance taking place from October 23 to 27, in Cali, Colombia. A free trade agreement with the Pacific Alliance offers the prospect to modernize and streamline our existing bilateral agreements with all four Pacific Alliance countries, expand key aspects of these agreements, as well as include progressive trade elements, such as gender, labour, environment and SMEs.

These free trade negotiations seek to confirm Canada as an Associated State of the Pacific Alliance. This is a strategic opportunity for Canada to advance its progressive and diversified trade agenda with key emerging markets, and sends a strong signal to the world on the importance of free trade to increase growth and prosperity.