

Canada and CPTPP parties agree to commence accession process with United Kingdom

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The Government of Canada is committed to diversifying trade and investment with key markets around the world, including in the Asia-Pacific region, as part of its commitment to supporting a strong, resilient, and inclusive economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Yesterday, the Honourable Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade, met with the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) members to discuss the United Kingdom's application to join the CPTPP. They agreed to establish an Accession Working Group to begin negotiations with the U.K. on its proposed membership. This was the fourth meeting of the CPTPP Commission and was hosted virtually by Japan.

Expanding ambitious trade agreements, such as the CPTPP, gives Canadian businesses more opportunities to grow in international markets while anchoring their success in Canada.

At the meeting, the members agreed on a joint statement highlighting the importance of expanding the CPTPP through the accession of aspirant economies. Such expansion would promote rules-based trade while creating greater prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, including through the CPTPP's high-standard commitments on tariff elimination, labour, and the environment.

Quotes

"Our government has been working hard to ensure that Canadian businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises and those owned by diverse entrepreneurs, have better access to international markets. Canada welcomes the United Kingdom's interest in joining the CPTPP and would welcome the agreement's expansion to economies able to meet its high-standard commitments on the environment, labour, women's participation, and much more."

- Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade

Quick facts

- The CPTPP is an ambitious and high-standard free trade agreement covering virtually all aspects of trade and investment.
- The CPTPP Commission is a group established after the agreement entered into force and led by ministers or senior officials of each of the CPTPP members.
- The CPTPP Commission oversees the implementation of the CPTPP and reviews the economic relationship between members.
- Japan is the 2021 Chair of the Commission.

- Canada and the United Kingdom have also committed to enter into new bilateral free trade agreement negotiations. Both the bilateral negotiations and the United Kingdom's possible accession to the CPTPP present opportunities for Canada to further enhance its relationship with one of its largest trading partners.