

# **United States, Mexico and Canada Joint Statement on the Second USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC Deputies Meeting**

January 26, 2023

SAN DIEGO – Following the second meeting of Deputies under the United States—Mexico—Canada Agreement (USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC or “Agreement”), Deputy United States Trade Representative Jayme White, Canada’s Deputy Minister for International Trade, Rob Stewart, and Mexico’s Under Secretary of Foreign Trade, Alejandro Encinas, issued the following statement:

“On the heels of a successful North American Leaders’ (NALS) Summit in Mexico City, the United States, Canada and Mexico today held the second meeting of Deputies under the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC at the Institute of the Americas in San Diego, California. We received updates from 11 committees and working groups of the Agreement that have convened since the second Free Trade Commission meeting last July. This work demonstrates that continued implementation of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC is an important priority for all three Parties and that the Agreement remains the foundation for continued North American economic integration and enhanced regional competitiveness.

“Today we discussed plans for fostering that competitiveness, including cooperation during emergency situations in order to maintain, re-establish, or otherwise address issues related to the flow of trade between the Parties, and highlighted the Competitiveness Committee’s work to upskill our regional workforce. In that regard, we welcomed the recent announcement by the George W. Bush Institute and the North American Strategy for Competitiveness (NASCO) of their intention to publish a study on workforce development in North America.

“We also discussed concrete steps to ensure that the Agreement’s prohibition on the importation of goods produced with forced labor will soon be in place across North America, moving us together in eradicating the scourge of forced labor from the global trading system. We heard directly from the Executive Director of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation regarding ongoing trilateral cooperation activities, which enable robust implementation of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC Environment chapter and Environmental Cooperation Agreement commitments, and information regarding the Commission’s public submission process. We heard from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on progress on the Tijuana River Watershed clean-up in the United States and Mexico. We welcomed plans for Canada to soon host an inclusive trade-related workshop for our teams to better integrate inclusivity into USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC committee work and ensure that committees are more meaningfully informed by a broad range of stakeholders, including especially those in underrepresented communities.”

## **Additional Background**

During this second meeting, the Deputy Ministers reviewed the ongoing work by USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC committees and working groups to implement the Agreement, particularly on Agriculture Trade, Agricultural Biotechnology, Competitiveness, Environment, Origin Verification, Private Commercial Disputes, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, State Owned Enterprises, Temporary Entry, Trade Facilitation, and Trade in Goods. The Deputies took note of these committees' progress, offered guidance for future work, and reiterated importance of the Agreement's continued successful implementation.

The Deputies also took note of the NALS deliverables, including the importance of working together to attract investment to North America.

The Deputies also engaged in broader discussions on Competitiveness, Forced Labor and Environment.

## **Next Steps**

As our countries approach the third anniversary of the entry into force of the Agreement, the Deputies recognize that our Agreement continues to play a vital role in strengthening our economies, including for SMEs and underserved and underrepresented communities. The Deputies noted that they would follow up with their respective teams to give additional guidance, and report progress to the Ministers before the Free Trade Commission meeting later this year.

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