



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

May 23, 2024

Following the fourth meeting of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC (Agreement) Free Trade Commission (FTC) on May 22, 2024, United States Trade Representative Katherine Tai, Canadian Minister of Export Promotion, International Trade and Economic Development Mary Ng, and Mexican Secretary of Economy Raquel Buenrostro issued the following joint statement:

“Today, the United States, Canada, and Mexico held the fourth meeting of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC FTC in Phoenix, Arizona. The USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC is a high-standard, high-ambition agreement that promotes the rights of our workers, advances our environmental priorities, and creates new opportunities for our producers. Nearly four years after the Agreement’s entry into force, it continues to strengthen our region’s competitiveness and resilience.”

During the meeting, the Ministers reviewed ongoing work to strengthen trilateral cooperation under the Agreement. The Ministers took note of readouts from the Working Group for Cooperation on Agricultural Biotechnology and the Committees on Textiles, Technical Barriers to Trade, Good Regulatory Practices, State-Owned Enterprises and Designated Monopolies, and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises.

The Ministers also took stock of trilateral cooperation related to the Agreement’s Sectoral Annexes and led discussions on Inclusive Trade and the Environment, North American Competitiveness, and Cooperation on Prohibiting the Import of Goods Produced with Forced Labor.

The Ministers provided guidance for future work under the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC and directed the Committees to redouble their efforts to advance the Agreement’s full implementation to help ensure that the North American economy continues to serve as a model for competitiveness and robust, broad-



based, and equitable growth. Ministers also agreed to jointly expand their collaboration on issues related to non-market policies and practices of other countries, which undermine the Agreement and harm U.S., Canadian, and Mexican workers, including in the automotive and other sectors.

### **Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises**

Ministers reiterated their commitment to promote mechanisms to increase the integration of SMEs into regional and global supply chains. Likewise, it is important to highlight the work of the SME Committee to promote SMEs led by women and Indigenous communities. This has been reflected in the three successful Dialogues that have been held, which demonstrate that this is a valuable space for the exchange of challenges and opportunities to integrate SMEs into North American commerce.

### **Inclusive Trade and the Environment**

The Ministers agreed that trade is an important tool to address global environmental challenges and to advance our shared sustainability goals. During the meeting, the Ministers discussed efforts to support environmental cooperation activities, including activities to strengthen the implementation of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC Environment Chapter obligations.

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to prioritize inclusivity in pursuit of trade and environmental objectives, including through discussion of efforts to promote effective stakeholder engagement as the cornerstone of the upcoming five-year review of the implementation and operation of the Environment Chapter.

### **North American Competitiveness**

The Ministers discussed the important work to fully implement the terms of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC FTC Decision Number 5, which entered into force in February 2023. To further this work, the United States and Canada shared publicly relevant information on their respective internal domestic procedures to coordinate government action and to consult with industries and other non-



governmental stakeholders, including workers, most directly impacted by the disruption of North American trade flows in an emergency situation.

Recognizing that emergency response work is critical for North American security and competitiveness, the Ministers also signed an addendum to FTC Decision Number 5, updated to include procedures for how the three Parties will respond to specific emergency situations that impact the flow of trade, including procedures for convening extraordinary sessions of the Sub-Committee on Emergency Response.

The Ministers also underscored the importance of increasing opportunities for North American workers through workforce development programs. Since 2021, the United States, Canada, and Mexico have hosted four trilateral workforce development forums to highlight innovative school-industry partnerships in key sectors, effective local and state-level partnerships and programs, and best practices in including underserved communities in workforce development programs. The Ministers announced the United States will host a workforce development event in Phoenix later this year to discuss skills and partnerships needed to grow North America's semiconductor ecosystem.

The Ministers also welcomed the recent meeting of the Parties' investment promotion agencies and office, organized by Canada, which focused on best practices in attracting investment in North America and areas of potential future collaboration.

### **Labor Rights and Cooperation on Prohibiting the Import of Goods Produced with Forced Labor**

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to uphold workers' rights as set out in the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC, including freedom of association and collective bargaining rights. The Ministers hosted a roundtable with labor stakeholders to hear their perspectives on the importance of advancing an inclusive, worker-centered trade policy.

The USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC commitment to prohibit the importation of goods produced using forced or compulsory labor and its implementation across all three Parties provides an opportunity to make a worldwide impact. The



Ministers reiterated their commitment to address forced labor in our supply chains and discussed opportunities for continued sharing of best practices, experiences and lessons learned in relation to combatting forced labor and other forms of labor exploitation.

### **Next Steps**

During the meeting, the Ministers agreed that continued engagement is key to maintaining momentum on implementation and enforcement of the Agreement. The Ministers highlighted that this meeting marks year four on the path to the six-year joint review of the Agreement and underscored the importance of making progress toward full implementation of the Agreement over the next two years. The Parties recognized the foundational role of the USMCA/CUSMA/T-MEC in the North American economy and its promise to improve the wellbeing of all of our citizens, including those who have historically been left behind by trade. The Parties expect to hold a Deputies meeting before the end of this year to assess progress made on the priorities discussed during the meeting.

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