## **Hon Tim Groser**

## Minister of Trade



20 June 2012

**Media Statement** 

## Canada joins Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations

Minister of Trade Tim Groser today welcomed the announcement that Canada, in addition to Mexico, will join Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the United States and Viet Nam in negotiations to conclude a Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement.

"I have today issued a formal statement on behalf of all TPP parties welcoming Canada to the TPP negotiation. This follows yesterday's announcement that Mexico will join the negotiations. New Zealand warmly congratulates our Canadian colleagues," Mr Groser says.

"This week's developments which adds two new countries – Mexico and Canada – to the TPP, demonstrates how dynamic this negotiation process is," says Mr Groser.

"Our vision for the TPP has always been to create a high-quality and comprehensive trade agreement which over time will act as a platform for wider Asia-Pacific trade liberalisation and economic integration."

Canada is New Zealand's 17th largest goods trading partner overall, with total trade worth NZ\$1.2 billion in the year to March 2012. New Zealand and Canada have a close and longstanding relationship. Our trade and economic relationship has much potential and Canada is a significant market of interest for New Zealand. Mr Groser says the inclusion of Canada in TPP will drive the overall relationship forward and is consistent with our goal of expanding markets for New Zealand's exports and investments.

Like the process for Mexico, the next step with regard to Canada joining the negotiations would be for the nine current TPP participants to complete any applicable domestic legal procedures. Following this Canada would formally join the negotiations as a new participant.

"I am aware that Canada's and Mexico's decision to join will be closely watched by other regional trade partners, particularly Japan." Mr Groser says that Japan was in a different position from Canada and Mexico regarding the TPP. Japan had not formally requested to join the negotiation, although it was keenly interested in TPP's progress and was consulting domestically on next steps.

"Our position on the membership bid of Japan remains as we've previously stated. Japan is a giant in world trade and economic affairs. Having Japan join the TPP would be of immense significance. We look forward to welcoming Japan to the negotiation once Japan is ready and we have established procedures for their entry that are acceptable to their government and to ours."

"As we go forward in the TPP negotiations, New Zealand will continue to ensure that the high level of ambition as contained in the statements of Leaders and Ministers in Honolulu late last year is maintained."

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