

## **JOINT STATEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND NEW ZEALAND, 14 JANUARY 2025**

1. During the Official Visit of Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt. Hon Christopher Luxon, to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on 14 January 2025, he met with the President of the UAE, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The two leaders discussed the flourishing New Zealand-UAE bilateral relationship and underlined their common interests, including a commitment to free and open trade, support for strong multilateral and regional organisations, peace and prosperity, and sustainable economic growth. Recognising the enduring and warm bilateral ties and fruitful cooperation as they enter into their 40<sup>th</sup> year of diplomatic relations in 2025, and welcoming significant recent developments, both sides expressed their commitment to further enhance cooperation and exchanges in the following areas:

### **Trade and Economic Relations**

2. President His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed and Prime Minister Luxon (thereafter “leaders”) witnessed the signature of the following agreements:

- New Zealand-United Arab Emirates Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA); and
- Agreement between the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Government of New Zealand on Promotion and Protection of Investments.

3. Noting that, during the first nine months of 2024, the value of non-oil trade between the UAE and New Zealand was more than USD

642 million dollars which is an 8 percent increase in the same period compared to 2023, and 21 percent on the same period compared to 2019, the two countries' prosperity is built on global connectivity. By reducing tariffs and boosting market access, this deal will propel these figures to new heights.

4. The leaders highlighted the agreements' promise to unlock further economic opportunities and strengthen supply chains for both nations and their peoples, and their shared commitment to advancing mutual prosperity and strengthening economic cooperation. The leaders highlighted the importance to swiftly progress ratification and implementation of the agreement.

5. The leaders underscored the UAE's important role as a global logistics centre, and transformational hub, including for New Zealand's exports to the broader region and beyond. Both leaders highlighted their respective goals to double the value of New Zealand's exports, and ensure food security for the UAE through the creation of international partnerships. With New Zealand exports of dairy products totalling NZ\$707 million (AED1.5 billion), meat \$50 million (AED106 million), and horticulture \$47 million (AED100 million), the leaders expressed confidence of New Zealand agribusiness' ability to help ensure the UAE is able to access safe, high-quality food products.

6. The leaders welcomed the conclusion and signing of the CEPA and the Agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investments. During his visit, Prime Minister Luxon met with UAE investment

authorities to underline the opportunities for UAE investment into New Zealand, including in infrastructure and renewable energy.

7. Both leaders welcomed the launch of negotiations toward a Customs Mutual Administrative Assistance Agreement (CMAA) that will enhance cooperation on customs matters.

8. The leaders further welcomed the 31 October 2024 announcement of conclusion of the New Zealand - Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement negotiations, a second free trade agreement between their two countries that will complement the CEPA. They further expressed a mutual desire to see the New Zealand-GCC Free Trade Agreement signed and entered into force as soon as possible.

9. Acknowledging the UAE's recent hosting of the 13th Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, and New Zealand's role as Vice Chair, both leaders emphasised their shared and enduring commitment to upholding the international rules-based system.

10. The leaders further noted the UAE's application to join the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement, an agreement which plays a pivotal role in fostering global collaboration, driving digital innovation and enhancing trade by creating an inclusive framework for the digital economy.

## People to People Connections

11. The leaders welcomed the connections between the peoples of New Zealand and the UAE. These were largely built on tourism, leveraging the Air Services Agreement and daily flights, combined with mutual visa waiver access. Other developments, such as the UAE's hosting of Te Aratini Festival, the Official Indigenous Event in November 2021, as part of Dubai Expo 2020 tolerance and inclusion week, and the strong Māori participation therein, had further cemented these ties. The leaders expressed hope that this would continue to further develop under the auspices of the CEPA's Indigenous Peoples Economic and Trade Cooperation chapter.

12. Prime Minister Luxon highlighted that over 4,000 New Zealanders call the United Arab Emirates home, underscoring the UAE as a model of peace, tolerance and co-existence.

13. The two leaders acknowledged with satisfaction the Double Taxation Agreement in place between the two countries since 2004, which has delivered tax benefits to residents of the UAE and New Zealand who live and work in each other's countries. Demonstrating commitment to further enhancements in this regard, Prime Minister Luxon also announced that New Zealand is working to allow eligible UAE passport holders to use eGates arriving and departing New Zealand from 2025, which will further facilitate travel and people-to-people connections.

## **Advancing Cooperation on Energy, Sustainability, and Climate Action**

14. Prime Minister Luxon thanked the UAE Leadership for its invitation to participate in the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week and acknowledged the UAE's hosting of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) since 2009. Both leaders reaffirmed their continuing support for IRENA's position as a convening platform to advance the widespread adoption and use of renewable energy. The leaders recalled and reaffirmed their support for the UAE Consensus, including the commitment to the global energy transition by tripling renewable energy capacity and doubling efforts in energy efficiency by 2030, agreed at the conclusion of the UAE's successful UNFCCC COP28 hosting in 2023, as well as subsequent outcomes of COP29.

15. The leaders emphasized the importance of international collaboration in addressing climate change and advancing the transition to a low carbon economy. They reaffirmed their commitment to the long-standing Renewable Energy Partnership Arrangement between their countries, and commended their ongoing joint efforts to support energy infrastructure in the Pacific. Highlighted among these initiatives is the UAE-New Zealand funded "LAKARO Phase 2" Solar Energy Project in Fiji, implemented by Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company PJSC – Masdar, under the framework of the UAE-Pacific Partnership Fund. This USD 50 million initiative has facilitated grant-funded renewable energy projects in 11 Pacific Island nations. Both leaders acknowledged New Zealand's contribution to the Masdar-led development of a clean energy project on the Caribbean Island of Barbuda.

16. Recognising the role of Antarctica as a place of peace, science and cooperation, the leaders welcomed the UAE's accession to the Antarctic Treaty System and acknowledged their mutual desire to further scientific research cooperation under this framework.

## **Regional and Global Developments**

17. The leaders also exchanged views on global developments, as well as those in their respective regions. They expressed their shared commitment to regional security and stability, and concern over the ongoing situation. They welcomed the ceasefire in Lebanon and called for the terms of the agreement to be implemented fully. They emphasised the need for a comprehensive and inclusive transitional phase and a peaceful Syrian-led and Syrian-owned transitional political process in Syria towards an inclusive and representative government formed through a transparent process based on the principles of United Nations Security Council resolution 2254, and the protection of civilians. The two leaders expressed grave concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza and called on Israel to uphold its obligations under international law and to ensure safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to the Gaza Strip. The leaders also called for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, the unconditional release of all hostages and detainees, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 2735, and urged all parties to exercise maximum restraint and de-escalate tensions. Both leaders shared the view that the two-state solution is the way to achieve lasting peace and security for Palestinians and Israelis. The leaders welcomed efforts under way led by the State of Qatar, the Arab Republic of Egypt, and the United States to mediate a ceasefire and urged the sides to agree

the deal being negotiated. They further encouraged de-escalation in the Red Sea.

18. The leaders expressed grave concern over the ongoing fighting in Sudan between the two warring parties, which has resulted in a man-made famine. They called for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and the facilitation of safe, rapid, and unimpeded humanitarian access. Both sides urged the warring parties to engage in peace talks and work towards forming a civilian-led government that fulfils the aspirations of the Sudanese people.

19. The leaders underscored the importance of achieving a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, in accordance with international law and the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and the rule of law, as fundamental underpinnings of peace, security and prosperity. The leaders reaffirmed the special importance of respect for independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of all nations, and stressed the importance of resolving conflicts through dialogue and diplomatic channels and highlighted that escalation would further exacerbate tensions and instability.

20. The leaders stressed the importance of reaching a peaceful solution to the dispute over the three islands, Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb, and Abu Musa, through bilateral negotiations or the International Court of Justice, in accordance with the rules of international law, including the UN Charter.

21. The Leaders further noted developments in the Pacific region and the importance of advancing Pacific priorities, including climate change, renewable energy and development projects.

22. The leaders further commit to enhance their partnership to promote tolerance, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, and jointly address extremism, racism, and hate speech in line with the provisions of Security Council resolution 2686.