CHAPTER 16

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

ARTICLE 16.1 General Principles

1. The Parties, recognising the fundamental role of SMEs in maintaining dynamism and enhancing competitiveness of their respective economies and their contribution to economic growth, sustainable development, and innovation, shall foster close cooperation between SMEs of the Parties and cooperate in promoting jobs and growth in SMEs.

2. The Parties recognise the integral role of the private sector in the SME cooperation to be implemented under this Chapter.

ARTICLE 16.2 Cooperation to Increase Trade and Investment Opportunities for SMEs

With a view to more robust cooperation between the Parties to enhance commercial opportunities for SMEs, each Party shall seek to increase trade and investment opportunities. In particular, each Party may:

- (a) promote cooperation between the Parties' small business support infrastructure including dedicated SME centres, incubators and accelerators, export assistance centres, and other centres as appropriate, to create an international network for sharing best practices, exchanging market research, and promoting SME participation in international trade, as well as creating business growth in local markets;
- (b) strengthen its collaboration with the other Party on activities to promote SMEs owned by women and youth, start-ups, and partnership among these SMEs and their participation in international trade;
- (c) enhance cooperation with the other Party to exchange information and best practices in areas including improving SME access to capital and credit, SME participation in covered government procurement opportunities, and helping SMEs adapt to changing market conditions;
- (d) encourage participation in purpose-built mobile or web-based platforms, for entrepreneurs and business advisers to share information and best practices

to help SMEs link with international suppliers, buyers, and other potential business partners;

- (e) promote the participation in international trade of SMEs owned by underrepresented groups, such as women, youth, Māori, and minority groups; and
- (f) support SMEs to participate in digital trade and e-commerce to take advantage of opportunities resulting from this Agreement.

ARTICLE 16.3 Information Sharing

1. Each Party shall establish or maintain its own free, publicly accessible website containing information regarding this Agreement, including:

- (a) the text of this Agreement;
- (b) a summary of this Agreement; and
- (c) information designed for SMEs that contains:
 - (i) a description of the provisions in this Agreement that the Party considers to be relevant to SMEs; and
 - (ii) any additional information that would be useful for SMEs interested in benefitting from the opportunities provided by this Agreement.

2. Each Party shall include in its website, referred to in paragraph 1, links, or information through automated electronic transfer, to:

- (a) the equivalent website of the other Party; and
- (b) the websites of its own government agencies and other appropriate entities that provide information the Party considers useful to any person interested in trading, investing, or doing business in that Party's territory.

3. Subject to each Party's laws and regulations, the information described in paragraph 2(b) may include:

- (a) customs regulations, procedures, or enquiry points;
- (b) regulations or procedures concerning intellectual property;

- (c) technical regulations, standards, quality or conformity assessment procedures;
- (d) relevant sanitary or phytosanitary measures relating to importation or exportation;
- (e) foreign investment regulations;
- (f) business registration procedures;
- (g) trade promotion programmes;
- (h) competitiveness programmes;
- (i) SME investment and financing programmes;
- (j) taxation information;

(k) government procurement opportunities covered under Chapter 11 (Government Procurement); and

(1) other information which the Party considers to be useful for SMEs.

4. Each Party shall regularly review the information and links on the website referred to in paragraphs 1 and 2 to ensure the information and links are up-to-date and accurate.

5. To the extent possible, each Party shall make the information referred to in paragraphs 1 through 3 available in English. If this information is available in another authentic language of this Agreement, the Party shall endeavor to make this information available, as appropriate.

ARTICLE 16.4 Contact Points

1. Each Party shall, within 90 days of the entry into force of this Agreement, designate an office or official within its trade ministry or equivalent entity as a contact point to address matters related to this Chapter. Each Party shall notify the other Party promptly in the event of any change to its contact point.

2. The contact points shall facilitate regular communication and coordination between the Parties, and cooperate, including with other appropriate agencies of their governments and any relevant sub-committee established under this Agreement, to develop and implement cooperative activities. 3. The Parties recognise the importance of cooperation and consultation, based on the principle of mutual respect, and shall endeavour to resolve any matter arising under this Chapter.

ARTICLE 16.5 Dispute Settlement

Neither Party shall have recourse to dispute settlement under Chapter 20 (Dispute Settlement) for any matter arising under this Chapter.