

Annex A: Joint Ministerial Statement on the launch of DEPA negotiations

1. We, the Ministers responsible for trade of Chile, New Zealand and Singapore, met in Vina del Mar, Chile, on the 17th of May and discussed ways to maximize the contributions that digitalization can provide to our economies and how to take advantage of the opportunities offered by trade in the digital era.
2. We recognize that the digital transformation of our economies can be an important driver of inclusive economic growth and play a significant role in achieving sustainable development, enhancing productivity of existing industries, and fostering new markets and businesses.
3. We also recognize that a free, open, global and secure Internet can facilitate connectivity, promote innovation and competition, and foster economic growth. We are committed to preserving a free, open, global and secure Internet as essential for the digital economy and beneficial for everyone.
4. We also affirm efforts by governments and the private sector to address the issue of terrorist and violent extremist online content.
5. Digitalization has also transformed the nature of trade. We are all small, outward facing, trade dependant countries, and we share a common objective of advancing trade in the digital era to support our businesses and consumers to take advantage of the numerous opportunities offered by the digital economy.
6. In the context of this shared vision, today we are launching negotiations to establish a first-of-its-kind and forward-looking Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (“**DEPA**”). The DEPA seeks to deepen and strengthen cooperation in digital areas, establish new international approaches for digital trade issues, and explore new frontiers in the digital economy, such as digital identities, e-payments, cross-border data flows and artificial intelligence.
7. The DEPA complements the ongoing WTO Joint Statement Initiative negotiations on e-commerce as well as digital economy work streams within APEC and other international fora.

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Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chile, Hon Roberto Ampuero  
Minister for Trade and Export Growth, New Zealand, Hon David Parker  
Minister of Trade and Industry, Singapore, Hon Chan Chun Sing