

Sky Camarce

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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

**Response to the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between
Australia and the United Arab Emirates**



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Dear Committee Members,

My name is **Sky Camarce**, and I welcome the opportunity to provide this submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties regarding the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between Australia and the United Arab Emirates. This agreement represents a vital step toward strengthening the economic, cultural, and strategic ties between these two nations.

As someone who was raised in the UAE and recently moved to Australia in September of 2022 - I observed a nation that embraced its role on the global stage while fostering a vibrant multicultural society. The UAE's policies in education, sustainability, and infrastructure inspired me to pursue meaningful contributions in my professional and personal life.

My journey reflects the impact of strong bilateral relations. Living now in Australia, I am deeply invested in fostering partnerships that echo the shared values of both nations. I see immense potential for both countries to learn from one another and CEPA is a testament to the importance of such collaborations and serves as a blueprint for a prosperous future.

Key Benefits of CEPA

1. Increased Trade Opportunities

CEPA will remove significant tariffs on Australian exports, allowing agricultural products, including meat and grain, to enter UAE markets more competitively. With its strategic location and world-class logistics infrastructure, the UAE serves as a gateway to Middle Eastern, African, and European markets. Australian exporters can leverage this to expand their global footprint. Additionally, UAE businesses gain access to high-quality Australian goods and expertise, strengthening bilateral trade.

2. Collaborative Innovation

The UAE's ambitious knowledge economy initiatives, such as Dubai Internet City and the Mohammed Bin Rashid Innovation Fund, align with Australia's strengths in research and technology. CEPA can foster collaboration in fintech, artificial intelligence, and renewable energy technologies. Joint ventures and technology transfer agreements can drive advancements that benefit both nations while positioning them as leaders in emerging industries.

3. Clean Energy Insights

The UAE's Barakah Nuclear Power Plant is a model for safe and sustainable nuclear energy development. Australia, with its uranium reserves and ongoing discussions on nuclear energy adoption, can benefit from the UAE's expertise in regulatory frameworks, community engagement, and operational efficiency. CEPA also provides a platform for collaborative research in hydrogen energy, solar power, and carbon capture technologies.

4. Education and Knowledge Sharing

Education partnerships under CEPA can enhance research collaboration and innovation. Dual-degree programs between Australian and UAE universities can attract global talent and foster knowledge exchange. Scholarships

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and technical training initiatives will prepare the workforce for emerging industries, ensuring sustained economic growth.

Recommendations

1. Advancing Digital Standards

Digital trade is essential for modern commerce and innovation. CEPA should prioritise the development of joint frameworks that ensure secure, efficient, and transparent digital transactions. Establishing shared cybersecurity standards will protect sensitive information and enhance trust between trading partners. These measures are crucial for fostering confidence in cross-border e-commerce and digital services.

Additionally, the agreement should address blockchain interoperability to streamline supply chain processes. Blockchain technology can improve transparency, reduce fraud, and increase efficiency in trade operations. CEPA can also promote shared research initiatives in emerging digital technologies, positioning both nations as leaders in the global digital economy.

2. Energy Collaboration

Australia and the UAE can establish a bilateral working group focused on clean and renewable energy. This group can facilitate knowledge exchange on nuclear energy, hydrogen production, and solar technologies. Collaborative pilot projects can demonstrate the viability of innovative solutions, positioning both nations as leaders in sustainable energy.

Furthermore, CEPA can encourage investment in infrastructure to support clean energy initiatives. For example, developing advanced hydrogen storage and transport systems could provide mutual benefits, as hydrogen is set to become a cornerstone of global energy. The UAE's expertise in integrating renewable technologies into urban planning, such as Masdar City, can serve as a model for Australian cities aiming to achieve sustainability targets. By working together, both nations can achieve more efficient energy transitions while maintaining their competitive edge in global markets.

3. Education Partnerships

CEPA should foster academic collaboration through joint research initiatives and dual-degree programs. Universities in both countries can work together to develop curricula that address the skills required in emerging industries such as renewable energy, artificial intelligence, and advanced manufacturing. This collaboration can also include shared access to research facilities, ensuring innovative solutions to global challenges.

Scholarships under CEPA can attract students and researchers from diverse backgrounds, encouraging intellectual exchange. Vocational training programs should also be emphasised, ensuring that workers are equipped with practical skills to meet industry demands. These initiatives will not only strengthen educational ties but also contribute to workforce readiness and economic resilience.

4. Increasing Cultural Exchange Programmes

CEPA can also serve as a cornerstone for fostering deeper ties between Australia and the UAE through Youth Exchange Programmes. These programmes can immerse young Australians and Emiratis in each other's

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cultures, allowing participants to build enduring relationships and develop a deeper understanding of one another's social and economic contexts. Such exchanges could include joint internships, academic residencies, or cross-cultural projects, which would equip participants with the skills and knowledge to act as ambassadors for their nations.

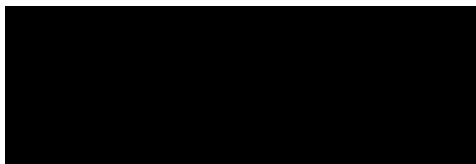
In addition to youth initiatives, Australia can strengthen its presence in the UAE by establishing cultural missions that cater to the growing Australian expatriate population in the region. With an increasing number of Australians residing in the UAE, cultural missions can provide support while fostering collaboration in arts, education, and business. These missions can host events, provide networking opportunities, and advocate for Australian cultural and economic interests, ensuring that the Australian community thrives abroad while enhancing bilateral ties.

Conclusion

As such I believe that Australia can leverage CEPA to increase market access, advance digital standards, and foster clean energy partnerships. While the UAE's established expertise in global logistics, knowledge economies, and sustainable urban development serves as a model for collaboration. Initiatives like education exchanges and youth-focused programs further deepen people-to-people ties, enriching cultural understanding and creating a new generation of global leaders.

This agreement not only strengthens existing partnerships but also lays a foundation for visionary projects that address contemporary challenges in technology, sustainability, and cultural diplomacy. CEPA is a testament to the enduring relationship between Australia and the UAE, and its full potential can only be realized through proactive implementation of its provisions and innovative initiatives. By working together, both nations can achieve a prosperous and sustainable future.

Yours sincerely,

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Sky Camarce

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