



16 January 2025

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

Dear Committee Secretary

Re: Support for the Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments between Australia and the United Arab Emirates

The Australia UAE Business Council strongly supports the Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments between Australia and the United Arab Emirates (the Agreement). Together with the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (the CEPA), this standalone treaty underscores the depth of the bilateral relationship, fostering sustainable and mutually beneficial growth for both nations. The Council commends the innovative and forward-looking nature of this Agreement, which aligns with the strategic priorities of Australia's Future Made in Australia agenda.

As the foremost bilateral business forum, the Australia UAE Business Council comprises leading organisations across various sectors, including agriculture, technology, education, infrastructure, healthcare, manufacturing, and renewable energy. The Council has long advocated for stronger economic ties with the UAE, Australia's largest trade and investment partner in the Middle East.

The Agreement establishes comprehensive protections for Australian and UAE investors, including assurances of fair treatment, protection against unlawful expropriation, and non-discrimination. These measures provide a stable and transparent investment environment, encouraging the growth of sectors critical to both economies. Additionally, the establishment of a "Council on Investment" ensures ongoing political and technical dialogue, allowing the bilateral relationship to adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities.

Australia's regulatory sovereignty is safeguarded through key reservations, ensuring the government retains the ability to legislate in the public interest, particularly in areas such as environmental protection and national security. The exclusion of Investor-State Dispute Settlement provisions reflects stakeholder feedback and reinforces Australia's commitment to maintaining policy autonomy.

The Agreement's impact is particularly significant for priority sectors such as renewable energy, advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, and digital infrastructure. The UAE's sovereign wealth funds, which collectively manage over USD 1.4 trillion, have already demonstrated their commitment to Australian industries, including tourism, infrastructure, health, and aged care. The Council anticipates this Agreement will further strengthen investment flows, driving innovation, creating jobs, and fostering economic resilience.

Complementing the CEPA, this Agreement provides stability for cross-border investments, particularly in agriculture and premium goods. By fostering confidence and clarity, it ensures Australian exporters and investors can seize new opportunities in the UAE's expanding market. The Australia UAE Business Council recognises the importance of this synergy between trade and investment agreements in creating a holistic framework for economic collaboration.

A notable feature of the Agreement is its focus on inclusive and sustainable growth. Provisions promoting corporate social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and meaningful engagement with First Nations communities set a new benchmark for investment treaties. By prioritising green energy collaboration and decarbonisation efforts, the Agreement aligns with Australia's energy transition goals and the UAE's ambitious sustainability targets.

The Australia UAE Business Council applauds the governments of Australia and the UAE for their vision and leadership in delivering this Agreement. It represents a significant advancement in bilateral relations, offering a modern and comprehensive framework to support shared economic, environmental, and social objectives.

The Council remains committed to working with its members and stakeholders to maximise the benefits of this Agreement. By fostering collaboration, the Council seeks to strengthen the Australia-UAE partnership and promote long-term economic prosperity for both nations.

Sincerely



The Hon Christopher Pyne

Australia Co-Chair