



**Australian
Chamber of Commerce
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17 January 2025

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

Dear Secretary,

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties' inquiry into the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement between Australia and the United Arab Emirates and the Agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Australia on the Promotion and Protection of Investments.

ACCI is Australia's largest and most representative business network, with a membership of chambers of commerce and peak national industry associations across the full breadth of Australia and the Australian economy. ACCI strives to make Australia the best place in the world to do business – so that Australians have the jobs, living standards and opportunities to which they aspire.

The UAE CEPA will be Australia's first free trade agreement with a Middle East economy and will be with Australia's largest trade partner in that region. In 2023, Australia two-way trade in goods and services amounted to \$9.9 billion, making the UAE Australia's 21st largest trade partner globally.

ACCI is strongly supportive of trade agreements that deliver new and commercially-meaningful market access for Australian businesses. The UAE CEPA will result in the removal of tariffs on 99 per cent of Australian goods exports by value when the agreement is fully implemented, as well as services market access outcomes across a range of key sectors.

As Australia's leading issuer of trade documentation, ACCI's chamber network stands prepared to work with DFAT on the successful implementation of the text negotiated through issuing certificates of origin to Australian traders. The inclusion of certificates of origin in the rules of origin chapter will provide certainty to traders about what is required to access the benefits conferred by the agreement.

In addition to market access outcomes, the agreement provides a framework for growing investment in sectors of shared interest and potential. At present, the UAE is the 27th largest source country for investment into Australia. In addition to its significance as a goods and

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services trade market, the present agreement places significant emphasis on investment, through an investment facilitation chapter, an investment agreement and a series of memoranda of understanding in priority sectors, contributing to collaborate in relation to green and renewable energy, data centres and artificial intelligence projects, the minerals sector, food and agriculture, and infrastructure development. ACCI encourages the government to leverage the private sector to ensure the benefits are realised in practice and focus on topics of the greatest commercial opportunity.

ACCI supports the ratification of the present agreements. ACCI is appreciative of the opportunity to contribute to the committee's deliberations.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Barnes
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Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

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