House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS511)

Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade

Written Statement made by: **Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Minister for Reindustrialisation) (Blair McDougall)** on 27 Nov 2026.

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) Update – November 2026

On 26 and 27 November, Minister of State for Trade, Lord Sarwar attended the 11th meeting of the Commission of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in Ha Noi, Vietnam.

CPTPP brings together a diverse group of economies under a high-standard agreement, united in their commitment to strengthening collective resilience and upholding the rules-based system, amid global uncertainty. It is one of the largest free trade areas in the world, accounting for 14% of global GDP, or £13 trillion in 2025. The UK's accession is estimated to add £2bn to UK GDP and £1bn to UK wages in the long run, with every UK region and nation set to benefit.

At this meeting, which marked the culmination of Vietnam's Chair year, CPTPP Parties agreed a range of outcomes to grow and strengthen the CPTPP Agreement, while deepening ties with countries and trading blocs beyond CPTPP borders.

Please see the Joint Ministerial Statement from CPTPP Parties here: CPTPP: joint ministerial statement from the 11th commission meeting, 27 November 2026 - GOV.UK

Expanding the agreement through accessions

The CPTPP is a living agreement, designed to evolve with the global economy by welcoming new members through its accessions process.

The Commission received an update on Uruguay's Accession Working Group, chaired by Chile, which continues to make good progress. As the UK does not currently have a preferential trade agreement with Uruguay, its accession could present new opportunities for UK businesses, whilst bolstering our relationship with a strategic partner.

We note with regret that Costa Rica has decided not to sign its Protocol of Accession at this meeting of the Commission. We reiterate our commitment to the accession of Costa Rica and we look forward to Costa Rica signing its Protocol of Accession when its domestic circumstances allow.

We are also pleased that CPTPP Parties used the meeting to launch new accession negotiations with the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and the Philippines. Expanding the membership of CPTPP is a priority for the UK, in line with our Trade Strategy, and this represents an important step towards bringing additional dynamic economies into the group.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is the UK's largest trading partner in the Gulf and 21st largest

trading partner overall. Total trade between the UK and the UAE was worth £25.1 billion in the 12 months to June 2026. The recent conclusion of a free trade agreement between the UK and Gulf Cooperation Council, of which the UAE is a part, was a milestone moment which will strengthen UK-UAE economic ties, and the commencement of CPTPP accession negotiations represents an opportunity to deepen this trading relationship.

Despite being the 4th most populous country in the world, Indonesia is currently only the UK's 55th largest trading partner, with trade in goods and services totalling £4.2 billion in the four quarters to end of Q2 2026. Commencing CPTPP accession negotiations represents an important step towards a potential first free trade agreement with Indonesia, deepening our close bilateral relationship and potentially providing UK businesses with valuable access to the biggest economy in Southeast Asia.

Commencing CPTPP accession negotiations with the Philippines is a important step towards potentially securing the first free trade agreement between our two countries, which could build on our existing £3.1 billion bilateral trade. This significant opportunity could improve access for UK businesses to a large and growing consumer and services market, with opportunities in clean energy, financial and professional services, life sciences and agri-tech. We are also pleased that the UK has secured the role as Chair of the Philippines' accession process, overseeing the forthcoming negotiation process

EU and ASEAN Dialogues

Alongside growing the agreement to new members, CPTPP Parties are reaching out beyond CPTPP to build stronger and more resilient relationships with major trading partners like the EU and ASEAN.

This year marked the second Ministerial Trade and Investment Dialogues with both the EU and ASEAN, building on the dialogues launched in 2025. The published Joint Ministerial Statements (below) record the outcomes of our first year of discussions, including good collaboration on digital trade, supply-chain resilience, trade facilitation and WTO reform, and the launch of a new Early Warning Network on supply chains with the EU. The Network will help CPTPP and EU economies share information on emerging supply-chain disruptions, enabling earlier communication and a better understanding of risks affecting trade across our economies.

Joint Ministerial Statement on the occasion of the second Trade and Investment Dialogue between the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the European Union (EU) - GOV.UK

Joint Ministerial Statement on the occasion of the second Trade and Investment Dialogue between the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) - GOV.UK

We look forward to building on this work in 2027, deepening these relationships and translating our discussions into further practical cooperation.

Strengthening the existing Agreement

As well as looking outwards, CPTPP Parties remain committed to strengthening their existing partnership by keeping the provisions of the Agreement and its supporting structures up to date.

To this end, Ministers received an update on the negotiations to upgrade the Agreement on Electronic Commerce, Trade in Services, Customs Administration and Trade Facilitation, Competitiveness and Business Facilitation, and Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment. Parties agreed the ambition to substantially conclude negotiations by the middle of 2027.

With regard to the areas where Parties had previously agreed to take forward cooperative

activities (Investment, State-Owned Enterprises, Gender Mainstreaming, Economic Coercion and Market Distorting Practices) Ministers agreed to advance delivery of those activities in 2027 and beyond, seeking to deliver concrete practical outcomes.

Parties also marked progress on the establishment of a CPTPP Support Office to assist with the administrative operation of the Agreement. At this meeting, Ministers agreed to establish an interim CPTPP Support Office in Japan, which will begin its work in 2027. They also agreed to continue working towards the establishment of a permanent body to provide such administrative support. This marks an important step in strengthening the institutional capacity of the Agreement, and supporting its effective implementation

Making CPTPP work for business

During Lord Sarwar's visit to Vietnam, he attended a Ministerial Business Forum on 26 November, hosted by the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) in its capacity as CPTPP Chair 2026.

The Forum provided a valuable opportunity to engage directly with senior business leaders on strengthening commercial ties between the UK, Viet Nam and the wider region. Opportunities for trade, investment and supply chain connectivity, were discussed as well as how policy recommendations can be matched by practical business use of the agreement.

The UK is grateful to Vietnam for its chairship and for hosting this important Forum.

Closing

CPTPP is one of the largest free trade areas in the world and gives the UK a platform to work with a diverse group of major economies to strengthen our collective resilience and extend the reach of high-standards trade. The outcomes of this Commission Meeting lay the foundations for enhanced trading opportunities for UK businesses and support economic growth. The UK acceded to the CPTPP almost two years ago, and we welcome the progress we have made with other CPTPP members during our second year as a Party.

As CPTPP Parties start to prepare for 2027, we welcome Peru as Chair of the CPTPP Commission in 2027 and look forward to building on the progress achieved in 2026. I will keep the House updated on future CPTPP developments.