

## **CHAPTER 24**

### **SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES**

#### **Article 24.1 General Principles**

1. The Parties, recognising the fundamental role SMEs play in contributing to economic growth, sustainable development, employment, and innovation, shall seek to cooperate in promoting SME participation in international trade and global value chains to support their growth and the creation of jobs.
2. The Parties recognise the importance of SMEs in trade and investment between the Parties and affirm their commitment to enhance the ability of SMEs to benefit from this Agreement.
3. The Parties recognise the importance of providing assistance to SMEs, including under this Chapter, to encourage their participation in global markets and supply chains.
4. The Parties recognise the importance of current initiatives, efforts, and work on SMEs developed under various international fora, and taking into account their findings and recommendations, where appropriate.

#### **Article 24.2 Information Sharing**

1. Each Party shall establish or maintain a digital medium that allows the public to access information regarding this Agreement free of charge, including:
  - (a) the text of this Agreement;
  - (b) a summary of this Agreement; and
  - (c) information designed for SMEs that includes:
    - (i) a description of the provisions in this Agreement that the Party considers to be relevant to SMEs; and
    - (ii) any additional information that the Party considers to be useful for SMEs interested in benefitting from the opportunities provided by this Agreement.
2. Each Party shall provide access through the digital medium to:
  - (a) the equivalent information of the other Party; and

- (b) the information of its own government agencies or authorities and other appropriate entities that provide information the Party considers useful to persons interested in trading, investing, or doing business in that Party's territory.
3. The information described in subparagraph 2(b) may include:
- (a) customs regulations, procedures, or enquiry points;
  - (b) regulations and procedures concerning intellectual property rights;
  - (c) technical regulations, standards, or conformity assessment procedures;
  - (d) relevant sanitary or phytosanitary measures relating to importation or exportation;
  - (e) foreign investment regulations;
  - (f) business registration procedures;
  - (g) trade promotion programmes;
  - (h) employment regulations;
  - (i) taxation information;
  - (j) information related to the temporary entry of business persons (as provided for in Chapter 13 (Temporary Entry of Business Persons)); and
  - (k) government procurement opportunities within the scope of Chapter 16 (Government Procurement).
4. Each Party shall regularly, or on request of the other Party, review the information made available under paragraphs 1 and 2 to ensure that they are up-to-date and accurate.

### **Article 24.3**

#### **Cooperation to Increase Trade and Investment Opportunities for SMEs**

1. The Parties acknowledge the importance of cooperating to reduce barriers to SMEs' access to international markets and global supply chains. Accordingly, the Parties may, among other forms of cooperation:

- (a) exchange and discuss each Party's experience and best practice in supporting and assisting SMEs with respect to, among other things:
    - (i) training programmes;
    - (ii) trade education;
    - (iii) trade finance;
    - (iv) identifying commercial partners in the other Party;
    - (v) establishing good business credentials;
    - (vi) insurance, tax, and payment practices in the other Party's market; and
    - (vii) helping SMEs adapt to changing market conditions;
  - (b) facilitate the development of programmes to assist SMEs to participate in and integrate effectively into global markets and supply chains;
  - (c) promote the participation in international trade of SMEs owned by under-represented groups, such as women, youth, Māori, and minority groups; and
  - (d) support SMEs to participate in digital trade and e-commerce to take advantage of opportunities resulting from this Agreement.
2. The Parties may seek to collaborate with appropriate experts and international organisations in carrying out any programme or activity. The Parties also recognise that the involvement of the private sector is important in these activities.

#### **Article 24.4**

#### **Cooperation on Implementation of this Agreement**

Each Party shall cooperate, as part of the implementation of this Agreement, on promotional activities targeted at SMEs. These activities may include:

- (a) undertaking joint roadshows to promote the Agreement to SMEs and the opportunities it creates for them; and
- (b) providing guidance on where SMEs can find information on doing business in each Party's market, such as the information referred to in Article 24.2 (Information Sharing).

**Article 24.5**  
**SME Contact Points**

1. Each Party shall designate and notify a contact point on SMEs to facilitate communications between the Parties on any matter the Party considers relevant to SMEs.
2. Each Party shall promptly notify the other Party of any change to its contact point.
3. The contact points shall meet as necessary and shall carry out their work through communication channels decided by the Parties.
4. Where appropriate, the contact points shall:
  - (a) exchange information to assist in monitoring the implementation of this Agreement as it relates to SMEs;
  - (b) consider any other matter pertaining to SMEs, including any issues raised by SMEs regarding their ability to benefit from this Agreement; and
  - (c) facilitate provision of recommendations to the Inclusive Trade Sub-Committee, as necessary.

**Article 24.6**  
**Obligations in the Agreement that Benefit SMEs**

The Parties recognise that in addition to the provisions in this Chapter, there are provisions in other Chapters of this Agreement that seek to enhance cooperation among the Parties on SME issues or that otherwise may be of particular benefit to SMEs. These include:

- (a) Chapter 2 (National Treatment and Market Access for Goods);
- (b) Chapter 3 (Rules of Origin and Origin Procedures).
- (c) Chapter 4 (Customs Procedures and Trade Facilitation);
- (d) Chapter 9 (Cross-Border Trade in Services);
- (e) Chapter 15 (Digital Trade);
- (f) Chapter 16 (Government Procurement); and

(g) Chapter 17 (Intellectual Property).

**Article 24.7**  
**Non-Application of Dispute Settlement**

Neither Party shall have recourse to dispute settlement under Chapter 31 (Dispute Settlement) for a matter arising under this Chapter.