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Dear Sir/Madam

Call for public submissions on PACER Plus

The Northern Territory welcomes the call for public submissions and comments on a prospective trade and economic agreement between Australia, New Zealand and the Forum Pacific Island countries.

The Northern Territory has limited trade with the Forum Islands. However we are keen to explore opportunities and potential synergies to assess general economic, trade and investment matters.

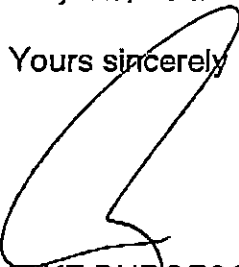
Comments on specific issues that we would like to raise include:

- **Capacity Building** – we support initiatives that are designed to increase the capacity of PACER countries to increase trade and economic integration. The development of capacity could be considered as a two-way opportunity, whereby Australian businesses that have the potential to develop their own capacity could be given the opportunity to deliver the capacity building activity. Preference could be given to Australian businesses in rural and remote locations who share similar circumstances related to business isolation and Indigenous business development.
- **Labour Mobility** – short term seasonal labour shortages are faced by many businesses in the agricultural and tourism sectors of the Northern Territory. We support the examination of initiatives to overcome these shortages through short term unskilled labour migration.

- Tropical Knowledge Co-operative Research – activities could be explored to increase the sharing of knowledge between tropical Australia and PACER countries. The transfer of knowledge could lead to increase standards of living and identification of potential commercialisation opportunities.
- Education and Training – we support any initiatives that could assist to develop education and training services, including higher educational, vocational and specific capacity building training. This could include both training delivery in-country (Forum Islands) and within the Northern Territory accredited educational institutions.
- Indigenous Business Development – the Northern Territory has developed some unique business development models for Indigenous businesses, specifically in rural and remote locations. This expertise could be transferred to assist Indigenous business development in the Forum Islands. One particular model that has proven successful in the Northern Territory to establish a sustainable industry sector, while preserving Indigenous culture, is the Indigenous art and craft sector.

I look forward to hearing of the outcomes of the call for submissions and the Northern Territory continuing to be involved in PACER Plus negotiation discussions. Further correspondence on the PACER Plus can be directed to Mr Brian O'Gallagher, Executive Director, Major Projects, Asian Relations and Trade Division.

Yours sincerely



MIKE BURGESS

31 July 2009