

## PREAMBLE

The Government of the Republic of Costa Rica, the Government of the Dominican Republic, the Government of the Republic of El Salvador, the Government of the Republic of Guatemala, the Government of the Republic of Honduras, the Government of the Republic of Nicaragua, and the Government of the United States of America, resolved to:

**STRENGTHEN** the special bonds of friendship and cooperation among their nations and promote regional economic integration;

**CONTRIBUTE** to the harmonious development and expansion of world trade and provide a catalyst to broader international cooperation;

**CREATE** an expanded and secure market for the goods and services produced in their territories while recognizing the differences in their levels of development and the size of their economies;

**AVOID** distortions to their reciprocal trade;

**ESTABLISH** clear and mutually advantageous rules governing their trade;

**ENSURE** a predictable commercial framework for business planning and investment;

**BUILD** on their respective rights and obligations under the *Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization* and other multilateral and bilateral instruments of cooperation;

**SEEK** to facilitate regional trade by promoting efficient and transparent customs procedures that reduce costs and ensure predictability for their importers and exporters;

**ENHANCE** the competitiveness of their firms in global markets;

**FOSTER** creativity and innovation, and promote trade in goods and services that are the subject of intellectual property rights;

**PROMOTE** transparency and eliminate bribery and corruption in international trade and investment;

**CREATE** new opportunities for economic and social development in the region;

**PROTECT**, enhance, and enforce basic workers' rights and strengthen their cooperation on labor matters;

**CREATE** new employment opportunities and improve working conditions and living standards in their respective territories;

**BUILD** on their respective international commitments on labor matters;

**IMPLEMENT** this Agreement in a manner consistent with environmental protection and conservation, promote sustainable development, and strengthen their cooperation on environmental matters;

**PROTECT** and preserve the environment and enhance the means for doing so, including through the conservation of natural resources in their respective territories;

**PRESERVE** their flexibility to safeguard the public welfare;

**RECOGNIZE** the interest of the Central American Parties in strengthening and deepening their regional economic integration; and

**CONTRIBUTE** to hemispheric integration and provide an impetus toward establishing the *Free Trade Area of the Americas*;

**HAVE AGREED** as follows: