



August 3, 2016

The Hon Steven Joyce
Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment Minister
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

Dear Minister

I am writing to you on behalf of the Latin America New Zealand Business Council to congratulate you on the outstanding initiative you have shown firstly in including Latin America in your new Centres for Asia-Pacific Excellence (CAPEs) initiative and secondly in extending the Prime Minister's Scholarship programme to this region.

Since your visit to Latin America in April 2015 and subsequent address to our Council two months later you have played a transformative role in raising New Zealanders' awareness of the opportunity before them if they engage culturally and commercially with Latin America. As you noted when launching the CAPE programme, the LANZBC has been working to grow understanding of the same opportunity for some time too, and it is therefore most welcome to see that our efforts will be boosted by these government initiatives – and, more importantly, that Latin America is central to your International Connections Package.

As one of the main barriers to trade with Latin America is precisely the lack of understanding of its cultures, languages and business and science environments, we look forward to finding out how New Zealand universities intend to respond to the CAPEs opportunity and how they will work to increase exporters' understanding of the language, culture, politics and economics of Latin American countries. As New Zealand's trading future will be built by our current and next students, furthermore, we applaud the opportunity you are giving them to acquire the study and business experience they will need to ensure New Zealand's future markets are not concentrated in too small a set of countries.

Thank you again therefore for both initiatives. Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of any help to your officials as they implement these programmes.

Kind regards

Dr Matthew O'Meagher
President