

Cross-Compiling the C++ Example Project

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This page gives an overview of the included example project and has instructions on how to cross-compile it.

Overview of the example project

The Greeter library

For this example, we'll create a very simple library with a single function that just takes a name and an output stream as arguments, and that prints a greeting message to this stream. It's basically a "Hello, World!" example, but as a library for demonstration purposes.

The structure of the library will be as follows:

```
greeter
├── CMakeLists.txt
├── include
│   └── greeter
│       └── greeter.hpp
├── src
│   └── greeter.cpp
└── test
    ├── CMakeLists.txt
    └── greeter.test.cpp
```

This structure is very common for C++ libraries: the function prototypes/declarations will be in the header file **greeter.hpp**. The implementations for these functions are in the corresponding implementation file **greeter.cpp**.

The **CMakeLists.txt** file in the **greeter** directory specifies how the library should be compiled, and where to find the headers. Additionally, there's a **test** folder with unit tests in **greeter.test.cpp**. The **CMakeLists.txt** file in this folder specifies how to compile and link the tests executable.

greeter.hpp

```
1  #pragma once
2
3  #include <iosfwd> // std::ostream
4  #include <string> // std::string
5
6  namespace greeter {
7
8  /**
9   * @brief   Function that greets a given person.
10  *
11  * @param   name
12  *           The name of the person to greet.
13  * @param   os
14  *           The output stream to print the greetings to.
15  */
16  void sayHello(const std::string &name, std::ostream &os);
17
18  } // namespace greeter
```

greeter.cpp

```
1  #include <greeter/greeter.hpp>
2  #include <iostream> // std::endl, <<
3
4  namespace greeter {
5
6  void sayHello(const std::string &name, std::ostream &os) {
7      os << "Hello, " << name << "!" << std::endl;
8  }
9
10 } // namespace greeter
```

CMakeLists.txt

```

1 # Add a new library with the name "greeter" that is compiled from the source
2 # file "src/greeter.cpp".
3 add_library(greeter
4     "src/greeter.cpp"
5     "include/greeter/greeter.hpp"
6 )
7
8 # The public header files for greeter can be found in the "include" folder, and
9 # they have to be passed to the compiler, both for compiling the library itself
10 # and for using the library in a other implementation files (such as
11 # applications/hello-world/hello-world.cpp). Therefore the "include" folder is a
12 # public include directory for the "greeter" library. The paths are different
13 # when building the library and when installing it, so generator expressions are
14 # used to distinguish between these two cases.
15 # See https://cmake.org/cmake/help/latest/command/target_include_directories.html
16 # for more information.
17 # If you have private headers in the "src" folder, these have to be added as
18 # well. They are private because they are only needed when building the library,
19 # not when using it from a different implementation file.
20 target_include_directories(greeter
21     PUBLIC
22         ${INSTALL_INTERFACE:include}
23         ${BUILD_INTERFACE:${CMAKE_CURRENT_SOURCE_DIR}/include}
24     PRIVATE
25         ${BUILD_INTERFACE:${CMAKE_CURRENT_SOURCE_DIR}/src}
26 )
27 # Enable C++17
28 target_compile_features(greeter PUBLIC cxx_std_17)
29
30 # Add an alias with the proper namespace to prevent collisions with other
31 # packages.
32 add_library(greeter::greeter ALIAS greeter)
33
34 # Include the rules for installing the library
35 include(cmake/Install.cmake)
36
37 # Include the tests in the "test" folder.
38 add_subdirectory("test")

```

The unit tests

The test file only contains a single unit test, and just serves as an example. It uses the [Google Test framework](#).

The tests can only be run on the build computer if we're not cross-compiling, that's why the call to `gtest_discover_test(...)` is conditional.

greeter.test.cpp

```

1 #include <greeter/greeter.hpp>
2 #include <gtest/gtest.h>
3 #include <sstream>
4
5 /**
6  * @test
7  *
8  * Check that the output of the greeter::sayHello function matches the
9  * documentation.
10  */
11 TEST(greeter, sayHello) {
12     std::ostringstream ss;
13     greeter::sayHello("John Doe", ss);
14     EXPECT_EQ(ss.str(), "Hello, John Doe!\n");
15 }

```

test/CMakeLists.txt

```

1 find_package(GTest MODULE REQUIRED)
2
3 # Add a new test executable with the name "greeter.test" that is compiled from
4 # the source file "greeter.test.cpp".
5 add_executable(greeter.test
6     "greeter.test.cpp"
7 )
8
9 # The test executable requires the "greeter" library (it's the library under
10 # test), as well as the Google Test main function to actually run all tests.
11 target_link_libraries(greeter.test
12     PRIVATE
13     greeter
14     GTest::gtest_main
15 )
16
17 # Only look for tests if we're not cross-compiling. When cross-compiling, it's
18 # not possible to run the test executable on the computer that's performing the
19 # build.
20 if (NOT CMAKE_CROSSCOMPILING)
21     include(GoogleTest)
22     gtest_discover_tests(greeter.test)
23 endif()

```

The main Hello World program

Finally, the Greeter library can be used to create a simple Hello World program.

hello-world.cpp

```

1 #include <greeter/greeter.hpp> // Our own custom library
2
3 #include <iostream> // std::cout, std::cin
4 #include <string> // std::getline
5
6 int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
7     std::string name;
8     if (argc > 1) { // If the user passed arguments to our program
9         name = argv[1]; // The name is the first argument
10    } else { // If not, ask the user for his name
11        std::cout << "Please enter your name: ";
12        std::getline(std::cin, name);
13    }
14    greeter::sayHello(name, std::cout); // Greet the user
15 }

```

CMakeLists.txt



```

1 # Add a new executable with the name "hello-world" that is compiled from the
2 # source file "hello-world.cpp".
3 add_executable(hello-world
4     "hello-world.cpp"
5 )
6
7 # The "hello-world" program requires the "greeter" library.
8 # The target_link_libraries command ensures that all compiler options such as
9 # include paths are set correctly, and that the executable is linked with the
10 # library as well.
11 target_link_libraries(hello-world
12     PRIVATE
13     greeter::greeter
14 )
15
16 include("cmake/Install.cmake")

```

Compiling the example project

Using Visual Studio Code

1. Open this repository (RPI-Cpp-Toolchain) in Visual Studio Code (e.g. using **Ctrl+K O**).
2. You will be prompted *"Would you like to configure project 'RPI-Cpp-Toolchain'?"*. Click "Yes".
(If this prompt doesn't appear automatically, click the  **No Kit Selected** button at the bottom of the window.)
3. Select the configuration that matches your specific board, e.g. *Raspberry Pi 3 (AArch64)*. CMake will now configure the project for you.
4. Click the  **Build** button at the bottom of the window to compile the library, tests and examples.
5. Package the project.

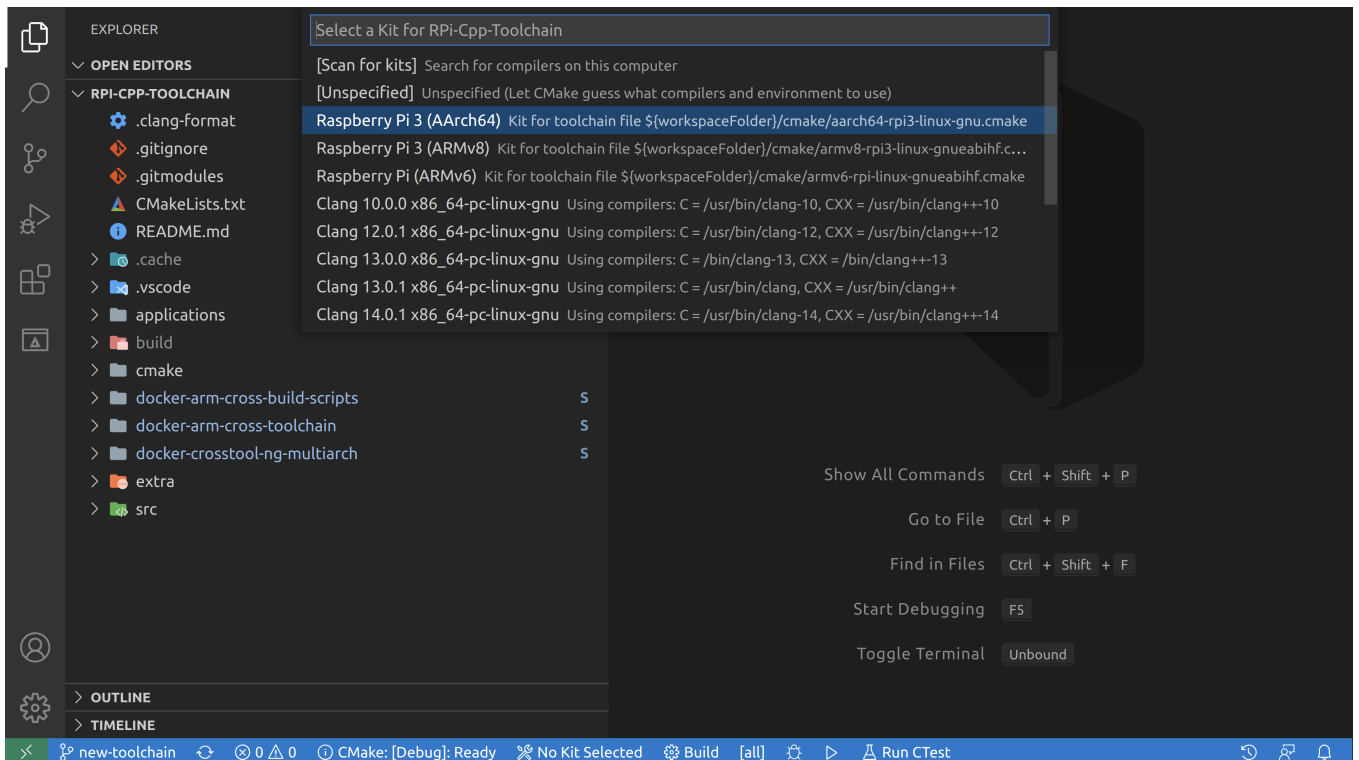
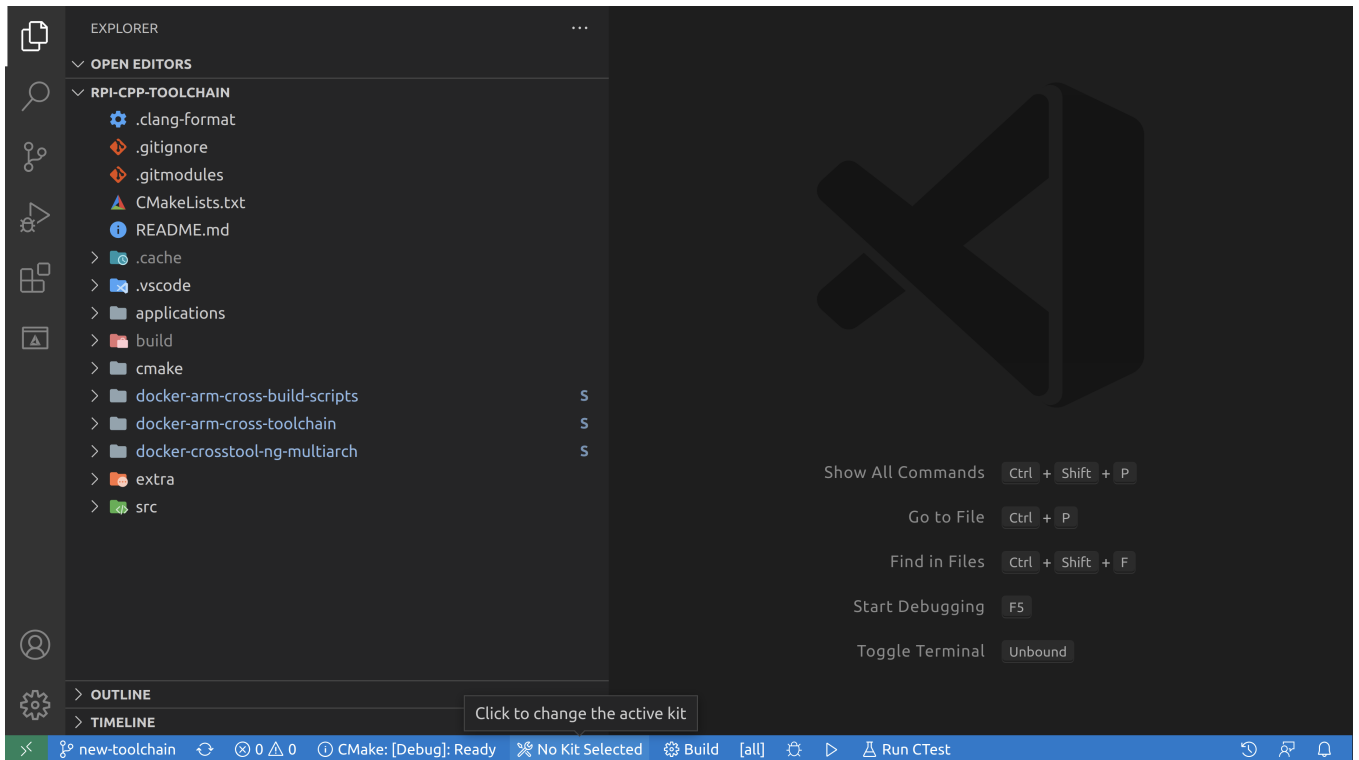
```
pushd build; cpack; popd
```

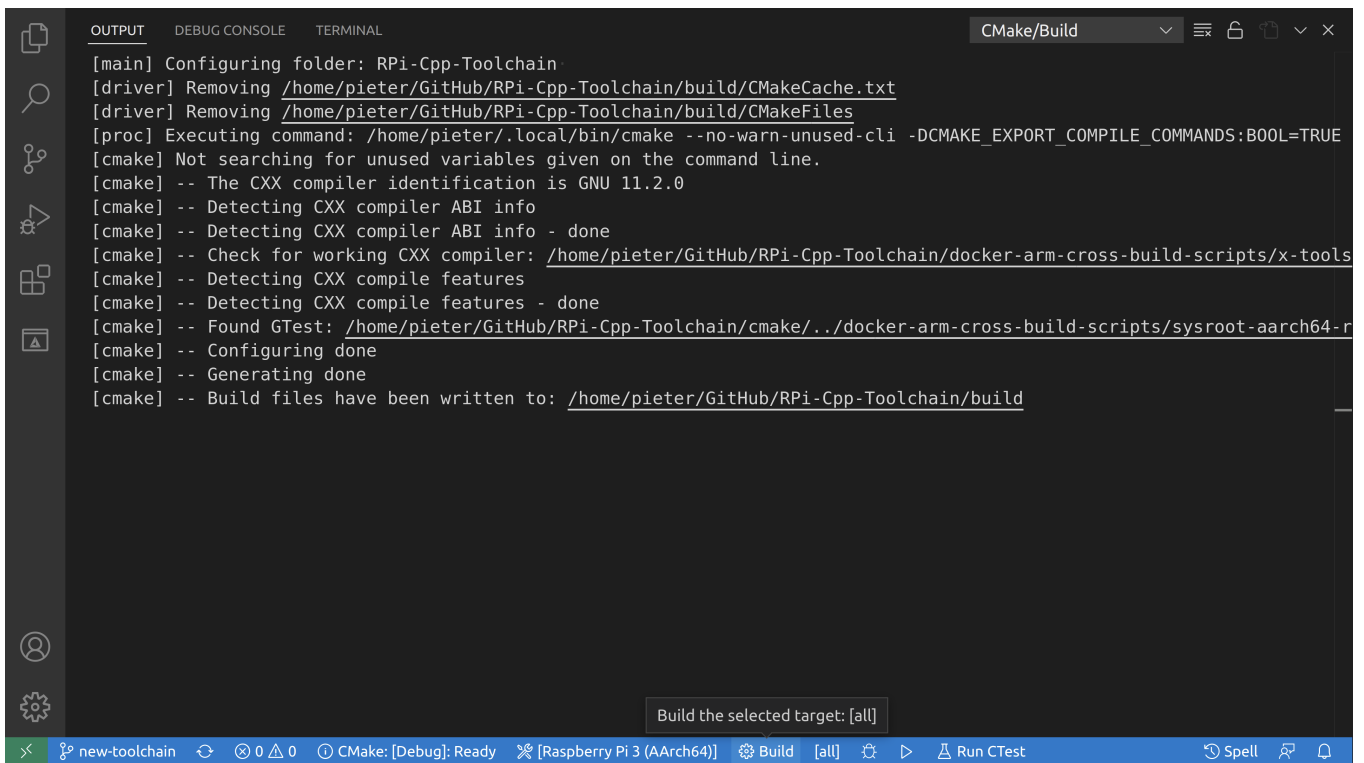
6. Copy the project to the Raspberry Pi.

```
ssh RPi3 tar xz < build/greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64.tar.gz
```

7. Run the hello world program on the Pi.

```
ssh -t RPi3 greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64/bin/hello-world
```

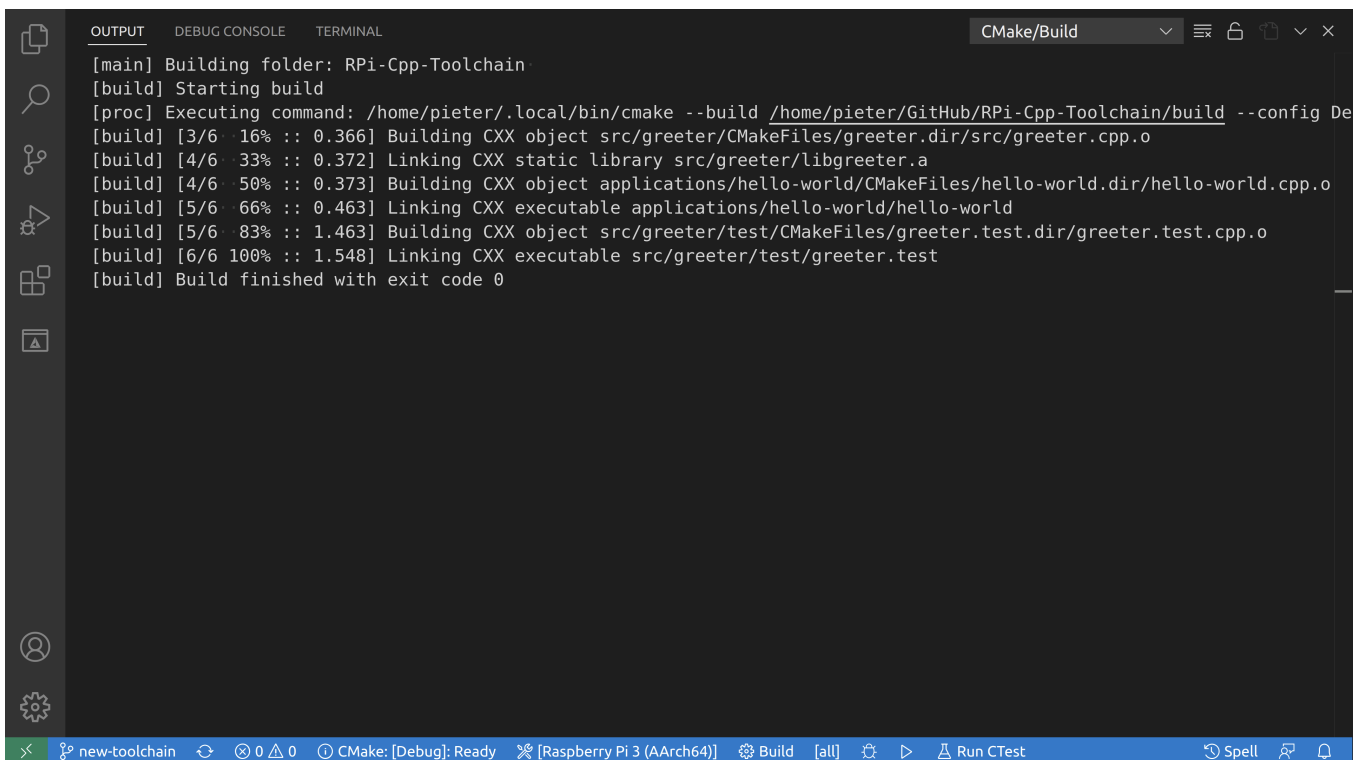




The screenshot shows the CMake/Build output window with the following text:

```
[main] Configuring folder: RPi-Cpp-Toolchain
[driver] Removing /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/build/CMakeCache.txt
[driver] Removing /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/build/CMakeFiles
[proc] Executing command: /home/pieter/.local/bin/cmake --no-warn-unused-cli -DCMAKE_EXPORT_COMPILE_COMMANDS=TRUE
[cmake] Not searching for unused variables given on the command line.
[cmake] -- The CXX compiler identification is GNU 11.2.0
[cmake] -- Detecting CXX compiler ABI info
[cmake] -- Detecting CXX compiler ABI info - done
[cmake] -- Check for working CXX compiler: /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/docker-arm-cross-build-scripts/x-tools
[cmake] -- Detecting CXX compile features
[cmake] -- Detecting CXX compile features - done
[cmake] -- Found GTest: /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/cmake/./docker-arm-cross-build-scripts/sysroot-aarch64-r
[cmake] -- Configuring done
[cmake] -- Generating done
[cmake] -- Build files have been written to: /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/build
```

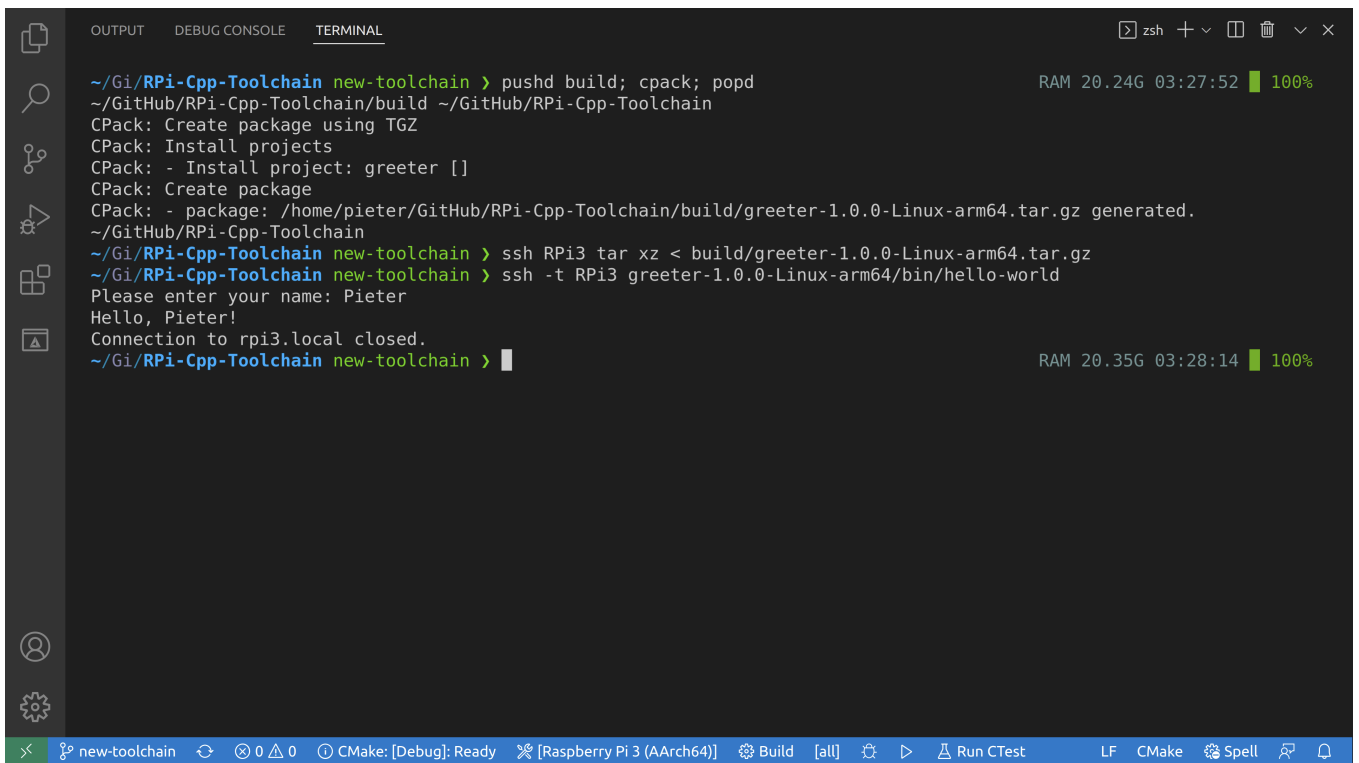
At the bottom of the window, there is a button labeled "Build the selected target: [all]". The status bar at the bottom shows "new-toolchain", "0 0", "CMake: [Debug]: Ready", "Raspberry Pi 3 (AArch64)", "Build", "[all]", "Run CTest", "Spell", and a bell icon.



The screenshot shows the CMake/Build output window with the following text:

```
[main] Building folder: RPi-Cpp-Toolchain
[build] Starting build
[proc] Executing command: /home/pieter/.local/bin/cmake --build /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/build --config De
[build] [3/6 16% :: 0.366] Building CXX object src/greeter/CMakeFiles/greeter.dir/src/greeter.cpp.o
[build] [4/6 33% :: 0.372] Linking CXX static library src/greeter/libgreeter.a
[build] [4/6 50% :: 0.373] Building CXX object applications/hello-world/CMakeFiles/hello-world.dir/hello-world.cpp.o
[build] [5/6 66% :: 0.463] Linking CXX executable applications/hello-world/hello-world
[build] [5/6 83% :: 1.463] Building CXX object src/greeter/test/CMakeFiles/greeter.test.dir/greeter.test.cpp.o
[build] [6/6 100% :: 1.548] Linking CXX executable src/greeter/test/greeter.test
[build] Build finished with exit code 0
```

The status bar at the bottom is identical to the first screenshot, showing "new-toolchain", "0 0", "CMake: [Debug]: Ready", "Raspberry Pi 3 (AArch64)", "Build", "[all]", "Run CTest", "Spell", and a bell icon.



```
~/Gi/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain new-toolchain > pushd build; cpack; popd
~/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/build ~/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain
CPack: Create package using TGZ
CPack: Install projects
CPack: - Install project: greeter []
CPack: Create package
CPack: - package: /home/pieter/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain/build/greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64.tar.gz generated.
~/GitHub/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain
~/Gi/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain new-toolchain > ssh RPi3 tar xz < build/greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64.tar.gz
~/Gi/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain new-toolchain > ssh -t RPi3 greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64/bin/hello-world
Please enter your name: Pieter
Hello, Pieter!
Connection to rpi3.local closed.
~/Gi/RPi-Cpp-Toolchain new-toolchain > |
```

Using the command line

```
1 # See what toolchain files are available, use the one that matches your board.
2 ls cmake
3 # Configure the project using the correct toolchain.
4 cmake -S. -Bbuild \
5     -DCMAKE_TOOLCHAIN_FILE="cmake/aarch64-rpi3-linux-gnu.cmake" \
6     -DCMAKE_BUILD_TYPE=Debug
7 # Build the project.
8 cmake --build build -j
9 # Package the project.
10 pushd build; cpack; popd
11 # Copy the project to the Raspberry Pi.
12 ssh RPi3 tar xz < build/greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64.tar.gz
13 # Run the hello world program on the Pi.
14 ssh -t RPi3 greeter-1.0.0-Linux-arm64/bin/hello-world
```