

Canada and the European Union hold the inaugural meeting of the CETA Joint Committee

Canada and the EU held the first meeting of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) Joint Committee today in Montreal

Joint Communiqué

September 26, 2018

Today, the Joint Committee established under the Canada-European Union (EU) Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) held its first meeting in Montreal, Canada, co-chaired by the Canadian Minister for International Trade Diversification, James Carr, and the European Commissioner for Trade, Cecilia Malmström.

Minister Carr and Commissioner Malmström reviewed the progress achieved since the start of provisional application on September 21, 2017, took stock of the status of the implementation of the Agreement, and discussed how CETA is creating new opportunities for people on both sides of the Atlantic.

Three recommendations were adopted setting the stage for further work under CETA, specifically on trade and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), climate change and the Paris Agreement, and trade and gender.

- Recommendation 001/2018 of 26 September 2018 of the CETA Joint Committee on trade, climate action and the Paris Agreement
- Recommendation 002/2018 of 26 September 2018 of the CETA Joint Committee on Trade and Gender
- Recommendation 003/2018 of 26 September 2018 of the CETA Joint Committee on Small- and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)

To increase trade and investment opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), contact points and a dedicated website for such companies will be set up, to take into account the needs of SMEs in the implementation of CETA.

Minister Carr and Commissioner Malmström discussed how the Agreement can further support efforts to address the urgent threat of climate change. By adopting a joint Canada-EU Recommendation on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, they affirmed their commitment to effectively implement the Paris Agreement. Intensifying existing collaboration in the climate field, the adopted document states that the two sides will "*cooperate, work together and take joint actions*" to contribute to the goals of the Paris Agreement and the transition to low greenhouse-gas emissions.

On the topic of trade and gender, the agreed document recognises the importance of making trade policies more gender-responsive in order to ensure that the benefits of trade liberalisation reach everyone. It also stresses the need to better understand the impact of trade on gender equality and women's participation in the economy. Canada and the EU will cooperate and share information to that end.

Minister Carr and Commissioner Malmström, recalling the October 2016 Joint Interpretative Instrument, and the commitment to initiating an early review of the Trade and Sustainable Development Chapters, including their enforcement mechanisms, agreed to intensify efforts to that end. They welcomed progress in the implementation of these chapters so far – Canada and the EU have already identified some preliminary joint priorities for this work, such as labour issues in the global supply chains in third countries; collective bargaining

in the context of the changing world of work, in particular in the web-based economy; understanding better the dynamic between trade and gender equality; and promoting responsible business conduct. Commissioner Malmström and Minister Carr invited the CETA Trade and Sustainable Development Committee to swiftly follow-up with concrete actions in these areas and potentially others. The two also agreed to propose solutions and outcomes at the second CETA Joint Committee meeting next year.

Carr and Malmström welcomed the establishment of the Civil Society Forum, composed of representatives of civil society that will conduct a dialogue with the CETA Trade and Sustainable Development Committee throughout its work. They also encouraged civil society to engage in future exchanges on regulatory cooperation in the Regulatory Cooperation Forum.

Minister Carr and Commissioner Malmström agreed to hold the second meeting of the CETA Joint Committee next year in Europe to review further progress, and to ensure that the agreement continues to deliver tangible benefits on both sides of the Atlantic.

Carr and Malmström welcomed progress and reiterated their commitment to reduce duplicative testing requirements under CETA's Protocol on Conformity Assessment, with a view to cut down on certification costs.

Today's meeting also allowed Minister Carr and Commissioner Malmström to reiterate their commitment to the success of CETA. The agreement serves as a signal to the rest of the world of the determination of Canada and the EU to continue to stand up for inclusive free trade, at a time when the global rules-based trading system faces serious challenges. For this reason, both sides took the opportunity to discuss initiatives to reform the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Finally, the meeting was an occasion to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the provisional application of CETA. Since September 2017 Canada and the EU have benefitted from increased trade in many sectors.