



Delegation of the European Commission to Canada

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Progress Report on the EU-Canada Trade and Investment Agreement, May 28, 2003

At the Canada-EU summit on 19 December 2002 in Ottawa, Canada and the EU decided to give a new impetus to strengthening the bilateral trade and investment relationship. Leaders instructed trade ministers "to design a new type of forward-looking, wide-ranging bilateral trade and investment enhancement agreement covering, inter alia, new generation issues and outstanding barriers". Such an agreement, in combination with the anticipated results of the WTO Doha Development Agenda Round would be responsive to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

As a result, during 2003 our respective officials face the important task of exploring the possible scope of the proposed Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement (TIEA) with the objective of determining the "architecture" of the agreement (areas covered and broad objectives for each of those areas) by the next Canada-EU summit on 17 December 2003 in Ottawa. Negotiations will start in 2004 and will conclude after the results of the Doha Round are known.

Trade between Canada and the EU has evolved over the years. Progressive trade liberalisation has diminished the relative importance of tariffs and highlighted the growing importance of barriers of a regulatory nature. In addition, "two-way" investment has become a very dynamic element of the transatlantic relationship.

Work towards the objective of presenting proposals for the design of the agreement by the December Summit has already started on both sides. The European Commission has held interservice consultations on the possible scope of the agreement and has started consultations with Member States representatives. The European Commission is also planning to consult the European Parliament and to discuss the TIEA with civil society, notably in the framework of DG TRADE's on-going civil society dialogue and in line with the recommendations for openness and transparency set out in the Commission's White Paper on European Governance.

The Government of Canada has launched a broad public consultation process with Canadian business, non-governmental organizations and the provinces and territories. An official notice was published in the Canada Gazette along with a number of articles in various government publications on the subject of the consultation. More than three thousand letters were sent to Canadian stakeholders asking for their views and opinions on enhancing our bilateral trade and investment relationship. In parallel, the Government of Canada will continue its internal assessment of the possible scope of the TIEA.

At the Trade and Investment Sub-committee meeting in Ottawa on 29 April 2003, senior level officials had their first discussion on the TIEA where both sides gave an update on their respective consultation processes and agreed on next steps to advance the work ahead.

Canadian and European Commission senior officials are expected to meet in July in Brussels to discuss the possible scope of the Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement, based on the outcome of their respective internal consultation processes. Further discussion will take place following the WTO Cancun Ministerial and through the autumn. Proposals for the design of the Agreement will be presented at the Canada-EU Summit on 17 December in Ottawa.

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