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Canada-Morocco Exploratory Discussions Towards Possible Free Trade Agreement Negotiation

The Government is participating in exploratory discussions on the possibility of launching free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations with Morocco. A meeting of officials from both Parties took place on June 1-3, 2009 in Ottawa. Before any decision is taken on the launch of FTA negotiations, the Government would undertake broad-based consultations with Canadians.

Background

The Government's economic plan, Advantage Canada, states that it is in Canada's national interest to be open to free trade opportunities and help Canadian business compete in global markets.

Trade relations between Canada and Morocco have grown stronger and more diversified over the last decade. An FTA with Morocco would be Canada's first such agreement with an African country, and Morocco could be the gateway to a new Canadian commercial presence in the Mediterranean region and in North Africa. In 2008, bilateral merchandise trade totalled \$452 million, consisting mainly in Canadian exports of wheat (primarily durum), semifinished products of iron and steel and dried shelled pulses (lentils), and Moroccan imports of citrus fruit (mandarin), crude oil, and women and girls woven suits. Several Canadian investors and service providers are currently present in the Moroccan market (e.g. mining sector, vocational training and education and tourism).

Morocco has an association agreement with the European Union (EU), which took effect in March 2000, providing for the complete dismantling of tariffs by 2012. In March 2004, Morocco signed an FTA with the United States that came into effect on January 1, 2006. Morocco has also concluded FTAs with Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan (these four countries are signatories to the Agadir Declaration), EFTA and Turkey. Morocco is a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA).

Benefits for Canadians

An FTA with Morocco has the potential to improve the bilateral trade and investment relationship and further advance Canada's foreign policy objectives in the region. It could also better position Canadian business vis-à-vis competitors in this market, particularly with those who benefit from a preferential trading arrangement with Morocco.

Exploratory discussions with Morocco will provide an opportunity for both sides to discuss the scope and parameters of a possible FTA, before any decisions are taken regarding the possibility of launching FTA negotiations.

Interesting Links

- [Morocco Country Profile](#)
- [The Canadian Embassy in Morocco](#)
- [Doing Business in Morocco](#)
- [Canadian International Development Agency](#)
- [Export Development Canada – Country overview](#) (pdf)

Contact Point

If you have questions or comments about this initiative we would like to hear from you. Please contact Foreign Affairs & International Trade Canada at:

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