

Canada Must Act Now to Conclude the Trans-Pacific Partnership

June 25th, 2015

Ottawa, June 25, 2015 – Yesterday, President Obama received authority from the U.S. Congress to finish the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations. Canada must seize the opportunity to work with TPP partners to conclude the deal, say leading Canadian business and trade associations. Canada must not be left behind.

Representing businesses from all sizes and sectors across the country, the group calls on all federal parties to support the comprehensive trade agreement, which would give Canadian businesses improved access to rapidly growing markets, update existing trade relationships and open trade with new partners.

“The Asia Pacific region is becoming a key driver of global trade and economic growth. The TPP represents a historic opportunity to diversify Canada’s exports to Asia and generate jobs through growing trade and investment. Canada needs to be at the negotiating table, not on the outside looking in,” said the Honourable John Manley, President and CEO of the Canadian Council of Chief Executives.

The TPP would give Canadian businesses improved access to 800 million consumers across 11 countries, representing nearly 40 percent of global economic activity. As Jayson Myers, President and CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, notes “the TPP is a modern trade agreement that reflects the new realities of cross-border supply chains and the longstanding integration of Canada’s North American market. It strengthens the competitiveness of Canadian business, our suppliers and our customers.”

Signing the TPP would support Canada’s current free trade agreements, attracting more foreign investment and reinforcing our reputation as a critical link in manufacturing processes spanning the world.

“Alongside the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with Europe, TPP strengthens Canada’s position within North America and will give Canadian businesses a competitive advantage in the global marketplace. We have a unique opportunity right now to play a key role in the founding of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and in negotiating access to markets that are critical to the long-term success of our economy,” explained Joy Nott, President and CEO of I.E.Canada, The Canadian Association of Importers & Exporters.

Today, Canada sells billions of dollars' worth of goods and services to TPP countries. Yet some governments place very high tariffs on these products, harming Canada's competitiveness. The TPP would lower or eliminate these hurdles, supporting exports from diverse industries across the country.

"Canada's farmers, ranchers, processors and exporters need Canada to be at the table when the TPP is concluded. Being at the table will help us gain the most value from international markets – value that's important to the more than 500,000 Canadians directly employed in the export based agri-food sector. The importance of this agreement for a sector that relies on trade should not be underestimated," said Brian Innes, President of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance.

In opening markets for service sector exports, the TPP will strengthen a crucial share of Canada's economy. "Canadian services companies should see significant benefits from the TPP which will provide small and large Canadian service providers with better access to key Asia-Pacific markets and will help to ensure that there is fair competition and a level playing field for Canadian businesses in those markets," said Chris Donnelly, Chair of the Canadian Services Coalition. "The Asia-Pacific region is vital to many Canadian services companies and it is critical that Canada work with the other negotiating parties to reach a successful deal."

Rather than a series of individual deals with each country, the TPP would synchronize areas like market access, investment and intellectual property, regulatory cooperation, e-commerce and government procurement across 12 countries. Business representatives agree: a unified trade "rule book," would level the playing field, ensuring Canadian companies have the same advantages and opportunities as their competitors in the region. "The TPP is an opportunity to learn from experience and set a new bar for the protection of trademarks, geographical indications, copyright, patents and trade secrets. Uneven or discriminatory treatment of intellectual property distorts investment in research, stifles innovation and delays new technologies. Canada's success depends on aligning with our trading partners to support the innovation that is fueling economic growth in the Pacific," said Scott Smith, Director, Canadian Intellectual Property Council.

As talks enter their final stages, the best deal for Canada will come from working hard at the negotiating table and championing open and competitive markets, respect for workers and the environment. As a country highly dependent on trade, supporting the TPP is essential to Canada's well-being and economic growth.

“Canadians know that trade creates jobs, spurs innovation and gives families affordable choices in the marketplace. But for trade to flourish, countries need to agree on the rules of the game. That’s what TPP is all about. For Canada, the decision is clear: we either step up and shape the rules, or we sit on the sidelines while others write them for us,” said the Honourable Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. *Together, the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance, the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, the Canadian Intellectual Property Council and the Canadian Services Coalition represent hundreds of thousands of businesses of all sizes and from all sectors and regions across the country. These businesses employ millions of Canadian workers and contribute billions of dollars to the Canadian economy.*

For further information, contact:

Claire Citeau

Executive Director

Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA)

cciteau@cafta.org

Isabelle Duchaine

Communications Officer

Canadian Council of Chief Executives

613.238.3727

isabelle@ceocouncil.ca

Will Dubreuil

Director, Public Affairs and Media Relations

The Canadian Chamber of Commerce

[613.797.1860](tel:613.797.1860)

gdubreuil@chamber.ca

Brad Fougere

National communications specialist

Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters

[613.447.0039](tel:613.447.0039)

brad.fougere@cme-mec.ca