



April 20, 2021

Hon. Mary Ng, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion
and International Trade
Global Affairs Canada
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1A 0G2

Mr. Valdis Dombrovskis
Executive Vice President
Commissioner for Trade
European Commission
rue de la Loi 200
1049 Brussels

Re: Canadian and European business communities call for progress on outstanding issues under the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) following the Joint Committee meeting

Dear Minister Ng and Executive Vice President Dombrovskis:

We write to urge progress on key outstanding issues of importance to the Canada-EU trade and investment relationship following the Joint Committee meeting on March 25.

CETA is one of the most progressive trade agreements ever negotiated by both parties responding to the challenges and concerns of the 21st century and opening many opportunities for Canadian and European businesses. It addresses all aspects of the bilateral trading relationship and will further position Canada and the EU to collaborate on the pressing issues of our time, such as climate change, energy and migration.

Our organisations are pleased with many of the results that CETA has delivered to date. The agreement has strengthened economic growth and employment to the benefit of businesses, workers, and consumers on both sides of the Atlantic and elevated the EU-Canada strategic partnership to a new level. Additionally, we are pleased to see the emphasis placed on implementing the climate, gender and SMEs recommendations adopted at the first CETA Joint Committee, and the endorsement of the CETA SME Action Plan for 2020-2021 following the Joint Committee meeting on March 25.

As global trade recovers from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying rise in protectionism that we have seen over the past several years, the Canadian and European business communities, representing companies large and small, call for progress on issues of importance to the Canada-EU trade and investment relationship.

To achieve its full potential, CETA needs to live up to its billing as a 'living agreement' and show progress on the following still-to-be resolved issues:

- Fully implementing the conformity assessment protocol and enhancing regulatory cooperation in industrial sectors;
- Market access for agricultural and food products by reducing non-tariff barriers;
- The protection of GIs, as well as market access for wines and spirits;

- Transparency on temporary entry provisions
- Finalizing the Mutual Recognition Agreement on qualification of architects.

We remain keen to see the full application of CETA and urge the Commission to work closely with the remaining Member States for a speedy ratification of the agreement in their respective legislatures. Additionally, communication around the CETA governance structures can be enhanced. The private sector would welcome greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities of the various committees and decision-making bodies, and how they interact with each other, in order to strengthen private sector engagement.

Lastly, we hope that efforts can be strengthened to advance bilateral work on forward looking issues such as digital trade as well as trade and environment.

At a time when countries are putting up barriers, CETA is opening-up new trade and investment opportunities for entrepreneurs and businesses across the EU and in Canada, while preserving the ability of policymakers to safeguard public health, safety and the environment.

Sincerely,



Jason Langrish
Executive Director
Canada Europe Roundtable for Business



Markus Beyrer
Director General
BusinessEurope



Goldie Hyder
President & CEO
Business Council of Canada



Ben Butters
Chief Executive Officer
EUROCHAMBRES



Pascal Kerneis
Managing Director
European Services Forum



Hon. Perrin Beatty, P.C., O.C.
President & CEO
Canadian Chamber of Commerce



Denis Darby
President & CEO
Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters



Dan Darling
President
Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance

Cc: John Hannaford, Deputy Minister, International Trade, Global Affairs Canada
Steve Verheul, Assistant Deputy Minister, Global Affairs Canada
Doug Forsyth, Director General, Global Affairs Canada
H.E. Dr. Ailish Campbell, Canadian Ambassador to the European Union
Sabine Weyand, Director General, DG Trade, European Commission
Rupert Schlegelmilch, Director, DG Trade European Commission
Matthias Jorgensen, Head of Unit USA and Canada, DG Trade, European Commission
Ether Nieto-Hernandez, Deputy Head of Unit USA and Canada, DG Trade, European Commission
H.E. Dr. Melita Gabrič, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Canada