

Minister of International Trade



Ministre du Commerce international

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0G2

APR 01 2010

Mr. Stuart Trew
Trade Campaigner
The Council of Canadians
210 - 116 Spadina Avenue
Toronto ON M5V 2K6

Dear Mr. Trew:

Thank you for your email of February 23, 2010, regarding Canada's negotiations with the European Union toward a Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. I welcome this opportunity to share information with you and the other signatories on the government's efforts to consult with and inform Canadians as these negotiations progress.

As a trading nation, Canada believes that free and open markets are essential to our future prosperity and to global economic recovery. Negotiations with the European Union in particular represent a huge opportunity for Canadians. The European Union is already Canada's second most important partner for trade and investment and the relationship holds great potential for growth. If a comprehensive agreement is reached, Canada would be the first developed country with preferential access to the European Union, the wealthiest single market in the world.

The Government of Canada is committed to keeping Canadians informed of the negotiations and to consulting as extensively as possible to ensure that an agreement meets the needs of Canadians. You mention the updates provided by Canada's Chief Trade Negotiator to various civil society organizations after every round of negotiations. These teleconferences, which provide an opportunity for key civil society stakeholders to receive information directly from the Chief Negotiator and to express any concerns that they may have, demonstrate the importance that we place on hearing and understanding the concerns of these organizations. As indicated during the last such update on February 5, these updates are not meant to be the only form of consultation with civil society stakeholders, and those who believe that their concerns cannot be addressed during the briefing are encouraged to follow up directly with officials of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada for a more detailed discussion.

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Your express concerns about the Canada-United States Agreement on Government Procurement. Given the time-limited nature of the stimulus funding in the United States and the impact of the *Recovery Act's* Buy American provisions on Canadian industry, workers, and communities, the government needed to act quickly. This is a good deal for Canada as it restores access for Canadian companies that were being hurt by the Buy American restrictions. I assure you that the Agreement reached not only addresses Canada's interests in the U.S. procurement market but also domestic considerations identified by the provinces and territories.

Thank you for taking the time to write and express your views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Peter Van Loan', written in a cursive style.

The Honourable Peter Van Loan, P.C., M.P.
Minister of International Trade

c.c.: The Honourable Lawrence Cannon, P.C., M.P.