

The work of Canadian negotiators is being supported by consultations with the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs), as well as with the provincial governments. In addition, there are regular and extensive consultations and information exchanges between federal and provincial ministers, and officials dealing with trade matters.

Intensive negotiations, based on agreed negotiating frameworks, are currently taking place in Geneva. Profiles of the overall package and some tentative agreements conditional upon a successful outcome of all the 15 different negotiating areas are expected to be achieved by the July 23rd meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee in Geneva. Outstanding substantive issues, detailed drafting of legal texts of the agreements, and institutional issues will then be addressed during the autumn in the lead-up to the concluding ministerial meeting of MTN participants from December 2 to 8 in Brussels.

Previous summits have been instrumental in advancing international trade negotiations and specific trade-liberalizing arrangements by providing political momentum and clear direction to negotiators. Decisions taken at the Bonn Summit in 1978 gave a powerful impetus to the successful completion of the Tokyo Round; the Toronto Summit in 1988 endorsed strongly the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement and the single market in Europe. All summits since the Tokyo Summit in 1986 have stressed the importance of agricultural reform as part of a successful Uruguay Round outcome.