

Investment is also an aspect of the negotiations for a Free Trade Area of the Americas and of a free trade initiative with the Central America Four (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua). In addition, investment is included in the free trade negotiations with Korea and Singapore.

Finally, Canada participates in regional investment discussions through the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. The APEC economies are working to liberalize their investment regimes through a program of voluntary individual action plans. Canada's plan can be accessed at <http://www.apec-iap.org>.

World Trade Organization (WTO)

The WTO incorporates a number of investment-related rules. The Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures will, when completely phased in, prohibit a number of performance requirements, such as trade-balancing requirements, domestic sourcing and export restrictions applicable to goods industries.

Although investment was originally included on the Doha Development Agenda, WTO members agreed on August 1, 2004, to drop it from discussion.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The OECD codes and the National Treatment Instrument establish rules governing the treatment of investments. Countries adhering to these instruments are committed to the transparent and non-discriminatory treatment of investors.

Corporate Social Responsibility

The Government of Canada expects Canadian companies to carry out their operations in a socially responsible manner, at home and abroad. To this end, we strongly encourage Canadian companies to adhere to standards of corporate social responsibility such as the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

The OECD Guidelines are a government-endorsed framework of voluntary standards for responsible business conduct. They provide recommendations on issues such as environmental protection, respect for core labour standards, anti-corruption and respect for human rights. The Guidelines apply to multinational enterprises operating within Canada and to the overseas operations of Canadian companies. They are particularly important in countries where governance structures are weak.

Canada has established a National Contact Point to work with business and other stakeholders to raise awareness of the Guidelines and assist in the resolution of issues. Further information is available from Canada's National Contact Point website (<http://www.ncp-pcn.gc.ca>) or the corporate social responsibility section of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade website (<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac/DS/csr-en.asp>).