

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Mitchell Sharp, announced today that Canada and New Zealand have signed an exchange of letters on the reciprocal retention of existing preferential rates of duties and margins of preference. The agreement was signed by the Honourable Mitchell Sharp in Ottawa with the New Zealand High Commissioner, the Right Honourable Dean J. Eyre, representing the New Zealand Government. At the same time the Right Honourable Norman E. Kirk, Prime Minister of New Zealand, in his capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs, signed the agreement in Wellington with representatives of the Canadian High Commission in attendance. Both Canada and New Zealand have recognized the value of the reciprocal preferential trade arrangements between them and have decided to preserve the benefits of these arrangements to the fullest extent possible. The agreement entered into by the exchange of letters is designed to do this. This agreement will operate in conjunction with the long-standing Canada/New Zealand Trade Agreement, originally signed in 1932, which continues in force.

The main provisions of the exchange of letters are the reciprocal undertakings not to increase rates of duty above the level applied on January 31, 1973, on products which were not specifically mentioned in the 1932 trade agreement, and to maintain, in respect of all goods traded between Canada and New Zealand, the margins of preference each enjoyed in the other's market on January 31, 1973. The exchange provides for exceptions to the general undertaking in order to permit rates and margins to be amended in certain circumstances. However, New Zealand has agreed to maintain for Canada minimum margins of preference of 5 or 7½%. Where margins are currently less than these minimum levels the lower margin will continue to apply. In return Canada has given a specific undertaking not to reduce the margins of preference on a range of products of particular importance to New Zealand.

The agreement is deemed to have come into effect on February 1, 1973, and shall remain in force for one year from that date and thereafter until notice of termination is given by either government.

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Le Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires extérieures, Monsieur Mitchell Sharp, a annoncé aujourd'hui que le Canada et la Nouvelle-Zélande ont signé un échange de lettres concernant le maintien réciproque des droits de douane préférentiels et des marges de préférence actuels. L'accord a été signé à Ottawa par Monsieur Mitchell Sharp en présence du Haut-commissaire de la Nouvelle-Zélande, Monsieur Dean J. Eyre représentant le gouvernement de la Nouvelle-Zélande. En même temps, le Premier Ministre de la Nouvelle-Zélande, Monsieur Norman E. Kirk, en sa qualité de Ministre des Affaires étrangères, a signé l'accord à Wellington en présence de représentants du Haut-Commissariat canadien. Le Canada et la Nouvelle-Zélande ont tous deux reconnu la valeur des arrangements commerciaux préférentiels existants entre eux et ont décidé, par l'échange de lettres en question, de préserver en autant que possible les bénéfices découlant de ces arrangements. A cet égard l'échange agira de concert avec l'accord commercial entre la Nouvelle-Zélande et le Canada, originalement signé en 1932 et qui continu d'être en vigueur.

Les principales stipulations de l'échange de lettres sont l'engagement réciproque de ne pas accroître les droits de douane au dessus du niveau existant au 31 janvier 1973 pour les produits qui n'étaient pas spécifiquement mentionnés dans l'accord commercial de 1932 et, de maintenir pour tous les produits échangés