



The WTO does not have the mandate or the expertise to determine which among its Members respect democratic rights. The WTO administers the framework of rules governing trade between Members. It provides a forum for trade negotiations; for monitoring the implementation of obligations and commitments under its agreements; for the review of Members' trade policies and practices, and other technical assistance activities; and for settling disputes between Members arising under the WTO agreements. The WTO can best support the promotion of democracy among its Members through its contribution to economic prosperity and the maintenance of a rules-based system. Increasing national income can contribute resources necessary for the promotion and protection of human rights and good governance that are crucial to democracy. Similarly, the rule of law that is cultivated for commerce will also be available for the protection of human rights and good governance.

The Government also believes that respect for democratic principles and human rights is necessary for economic prosperity. Consequently, the promotion of greater coherence of international economic and social policy is an important objective of the Government. Canada strives to build understanding amongst its trading partners about how respect for human rights and democratic principles fit into a coherent whole that contributes to and benefits from opportunities presented by trade and investment. It does this through a variety of initiatives at the bilateral, regional and global level. A good example is the Summit of the Americas process, which provides a framework for parallel progress on a broad range of political, economic and social issues. The development of the Summit's "democracy clause" was a singular achievement of the Quebec Summit of the Americas.

Success in reaching Canada's objectives of promoting economic prosperity, as well as democratic principles and human rights, requires flexibility, both in choosing where to pursue initiatives and how to measure success. It also requires building on the particular strengths of each of the international institutions in which Canada is active.

Canada's trade policy seeks to take account of the work in international fora that contributes to sustainable development in all its facets, including economic development, democracy, human rights and good governance, and environmental protection. To the extent that the deliberations of these other fora are related to international trade, the Government endeavours to take them into account in its international trade policy, including in the WTO.

