

This is a government that listens to the concerns of all its regions and works hard to bring them together to a common resolve.

There will always be regional differences in a country as big and as diverse as Canada.

After this week's First Ministers Conference on the Trade Negotiations, you heard some differing opinions. Nevertheless, the vast majority of the Premiers were pleased with the progress of negotiations to date. They are a lot more conciliatory in the room than on the steps talking to the media.

We will continue to work toward an agreement that benefits the vast majority of Canadians and seeks to meet as many regional concerns as possible.

I think it bears repeating that there will be no deal unless it's a good deal.

But think of the benefits to Canada of a good deal.

- More jobs and lower prices.
- Economic studies show every region will benefit from added economic growth.
- Irresponsible not to pursue in face of growing protectionism.
- There is no status quo. Projections show our economic growth will be stopped by rising protectionism.

The aim of our current negotiations is to create a comprehensive trade treaty. It should reduce and eliminate barriers to trade over a period of ten years. It should establish clear rules to govern our large and complex trading relationship with the United States. And, it should contain a mechanism for settling any trade disputes that should arise between the two countries. The system we have doesn't work.

Let me turn to the actual contracts of an agreement as we envisage it.

First, like other trade negotiations Canada has been involved in under the GATT, the treaty would eliminate the existing tariffs that each country maintains with respect to goods coming from the other. But, it is important to note, not all tariffs would be eliminated at once. Many would be reduced over a period of ten years to allow our industries and producers time to adjust to new competition.