

"The EU's commitment in the Uruguay Round was an important concession," Mr. Goodale said. "We are determined to get the access to the European market to which we are entitled."

Canada and the EU held consultations on the regulations in July. Under WTO rules, Canada is entitled to seek a panel if the issue is not resolved in the consultations.

"We still prefer a resolution of this issue through negotiations," Mr. MacLaren said. "But we are confident we can get the results we are seeking through the WTO dispute settlement process."

The ministers also said that Canada is requesting a panel regarding Japan's liquor tax regime. Distilled spirits such as Canadian whiskey are taxed at higher rates than Japanese distilled spirits such as shochu. In July, the EU the United States and Canada, in consultations with Japan, failed to arrive at a satisfactory solution.

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