

The Government of Canada uses a variety of mechanisms to maintain a close relationship with the provinces and territories in the area of international trade policy. Government officials hold quarterly meetings with their provincial and territorial counterparts, as part of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Committee on Trade (C-Trade), to review the overall trade agenda and emerging trade policy issues, as well as to consult on the formulation of Canada's negotiating positions and strategy. In addition to these regular meetings, the Minister and Deputy Minister for International Trade meet roughly once a year with provincial and territorial counterparts to develop further the cooperative relationship that exists with the provinces and territories in trade and investment policy, to update them on recent trade developments, and to discuss trade policy directions, priorities and strategies. With the endorsement of the provinces and territories, the Department has established a joint working group to address the concerns of municipal and community-based interests regarding international trade. In 2004, the Government of Canada worked with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) to prepare a guide to help Canadian municipalities better understand international trade obligations and impacts involving areas of municipal jurisdiction. Once completed in early 2005, the guide will be posted on the FCM and the department Web sites.

The government is also addressing issues of interest to a broad spectrum of Canadians using multi-stakeholder and sectoral information sessions, as well as round table discussions. Reports on many of these sessions are available on the Department's trade negotiations and agreements Web site (www.tradeagreements.gc.ca). Examples of information and consultation sessions that took place during the past year are set out below:

- Throughout the year, Canada's chief negotiators hosted teleconferences in order to update key stakeholders on the progress of their respective negotiations.
- In February 2004, representatives of DFAIT (IT) met with some 20 members of the Trade and Investment Research Project, a coalition of Canadian civil society organizations working on issues related to the broad

realm of international trade agreements under negotiation and implementation, to provide them with an overall picture of the state of negotiations.

- In March 2004, the Montreal World Trade Centre, in partnership with DFAIT (IT), organized a seminar entitled Focus on Trade Agreements: NAFTA – 10 years later: An update and outlook for Canadian businesses. More than 60 representatives from the business community, associations, academics and civil society attended the event and shared their experiences and expertise. Minister Peterson joined the group at the end of the event and made a keynote address on the topic: "NAFTA: The Way Ahead."
- In March 2004, DFAIT (IT) organized an Academic Round Table Discussion on Vancouver Island. Participants at the event included experts from British Columbia's universities and representatives from the business community, the civil society and the provincial government. Discussions at the round table explored China's role in Asian regionalism and its implications for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as well as the impacts of a re-emerging Asia for NAFTA economies.
- In March and April 2004, DFAIT (IT) trade officials, in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, conducted a series of 13 consultation workshops across Canada on the services trade negotiations currently under way both at the World Trade Organization (WTO) (with respect to the General Agreement on Trade in Services—GATS) and in various regional forums, to gather valuable input on immediate and prospective markets of interest that will help in refining Canada's negotiating strategy for trade in services.
- In September 2004, Minister Peterson travelled to Vancouver as part of his Outreach Program. The purpose of this visit was to consult Canadians on the development and implementation of Canada's international trade agenda as well as to encourage Canadian companies to export their products and services abroad.
- In November 2004, the Foreign Affairs component of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (FA) (DFAIT [FA]) held its annual NGO information meeting on issues relating