

## Canada Becomes TPP's 11<sup>th</sup> Member

The nine Trans-Pacific Partnership countries (Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the U.S. and Vietnam) have extended an invitation to Canada to join the negotiations, pending successful conclusion of domestic procedures, a statement from the office of the U.S. Trade Representative said.

The announcement was made a day after the group had welcomed Mexico as their tenth member on June 18<sup>th</sup>. "Inviting Canada to join the TPP negotiations presents a unique opportunity for the United States to build upon this already dynamic trading relationship. Through the TPP, we are bringing the relationship with our largest trading partner into the 21<sup>st</sup> century," U.S. Trade Representative, Ron Kirk said.

Like in the case of Mexico, the U.S. Administration will have to notify its Congress of its intent to include Canada in the TPP negotiations. This will then trigger a 90-day consultation period with Congress on the U.S. negotiating objectives with respect to both new members before Mexico and Canada can formally enter into the negotiations, though observers said it wouldn't be surprising if informal discussions are held in the interim.

"We look forward to continuing consultations with the Congress and domestic stakeholders regarding Canada's entry into the TPP as we move closer to a broad-based, high-standard trade agreement in the Asia-Pacific region," the USTR said in a statement released on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

The nine TPP Members will gather in San Diego, California on July 2–10 for their 13<sup>th</sup> round of negotiations. Observers believe both Canada and Mexico wouldn't be invited to participate in the San Diego Round, nor in the projected September meeting. However, there are rumbles of another round in December, following the U.S. presidential election, in which both Canada and Mexico could make their grand entrance, one source said following the negotiations.

## Conditions for Entry

The conditions for Canada and Mexico's entry are still vague. An informed source said the current TPP Members sent a letter to both Canada and Mexico on June 15<sup>th</sup> which contained some of the conditions for their respective entry. However, it seems that the language contained is a source of various interpretations.

The question here, however, is whether both newcomers will be allowed to influence texts that are partially closed or in other words, chapters that contains sections that have been agreed to. Aside from texts that have yet to be concluded, both countries committed not to re-open issues that have already been agreed upon by the time of their entry – which at this point in the negotiations pertains only to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Though more chapters can be added to the list at end of the San Diego round – it is believed that the most controversial issues in the negotiations will still be on the table by the time Mexico and Canada join the talks.

Would the two countries be able to table proposals on chapters partially closed, or would they be confined to only negotiate on non-consensual issues – whether sections within chapters or whole chapters themselves – remains an open question.

## G-20 Summit in Los Cabos

Leaders from the G-20 leaders (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, Britain, U.S. and the EU) reiterated their support for the Doha Development Agenda, backing the strategy “to pursue fresh, credible approaches to furthering trade negotiations across the board.”

As expected, leaders supported the decision to focus immediate work on trade facilitation and other issues pertaining to developing Members such as easing Least Developed countries’ (LDC) accession to the WTO.

“We will continue to work towards concluding the Doha Round negotiations, including outcomes in specific areas where progress is possible, such as trade facilitation, and other issues of concern for least developed countries. We urge progress in streamlining WTO accession procedures for the world’s poorest countries,” G-20 leaders said in their final declaration.

## Upcoming Events

- Services Plurilateral Talks, week of June 25
- TPP Round XIII, Week of July 2, 2012
- Trade Facilitation Negotiating Group, July 9–12, 2012
- CETA, Week of July 23 (TBC) September, 2012
- WTO General Council, July 25-26, October 3-4, December 19-20, 2012
- APEC Leaders Summit, September 2–9, 2012, Vladivostok (Russia)
- Regular Agriculture Committee, September 20-21, November 14-15, 2012
- WTO Public Forum, September 24–26, 2012
- TPP Round XIV, September (TBC)
- TPP Round XV, December (TBC)

Geneva Watch is published by Dairy Farmers of Canada, Chicken Farmers of Canada, Egg Farmers of Canada, Turkey Farmers of Canada and Canadian Hatching Egg Producers to report on the various events occurring in Geneva, particularly on the WTO negotiations on agriculture.

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