



Premiers Move to Strengthen Trade

VANCOUVER, January 28, 2008 – Canada's Premiers today agreed on measures to strengthen Canada's economy through enhanced domestic and international trade.

Reaffirming the critical importance of a stronger and more effective Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), Canada's Premiers today reported on progress on their five-point plan to strengthen domestic trade between the provinces and territories.

- **Dispute Resolution:** Premiers endorsed a dispute resolution system, including a tiered approach to monetary awards for failure to comply with a trade panel's ruling, which will ensure full compliance and enforceability of Panel rulings under the Agreement on Internal Trade.
- **Labour Mobility:** Premiers noted that the Forum of Labour Market Ministers has made good progress towards meeting the deadline of April 1, 2009 for full compliance with the existing obligations of the AIT as a first step. Premiers directed ministers to report to the Council with a plan and timelines for strengthening the AIT to achieve full labour mobility within Canada.
- **Energy:** Progress is being made toward finalizing the Energy chapter of the AIT. Premiers have directed ministers to redouble their efforts to complete the chapter.
- **Agriculture:** Premiers directed their Agriculture Ministers to produce text for a revised Agricultural and Food Goods chapter that is national in scope and includes the participation of the federal government.
- **Reconciliation of Regulations:** Premiers expect progress to be made on reconciling regulations for the transport sector and directed ministers to complete their work.

Premiers directed ministers to complete their negotiations to strengthen the Agreement on Internal Trade for the summer meeting of the Council of the Federation in Quebec City this July.

Premiers also discussed the importance of expanding Canada's trade in key international markets. They called on the federal government to move forward to complete bilateral agreements. Premiers believe that there is a window of opportunity for an agreement in the short term for a new economic partnership with the European Union. Premiers also called on the federal government to move aggressively on agreements with India and other emerging markets in the Asia-Pacific region.

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