
Canada Welcomes First Round of Negotiations to Expand Free Trade with Israel

Canada's trade agenda to help improve access for Canadian producers, manufacturers and exporters

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The Honourable Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade, today announced the start of the first round of negotiations to expand and modernize the Canada-Israel Free Trade Agreement (CIFTA). The negotiations are being held in Israel from February 3 to 9, 2014.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper announced the launch of negotiations on January 21 during an official visit to Israel.

Israel has been identified as a priority market through the Government of Canada's [Global Markets Action Plan](#), released in November 2013.

Quick Facts

- An expanded and modernized CIFTA will enhance bilateral commercial flows by reducing technical barriers, enhancing cooperation, increasing transparency in regulatory matters and reducing transaction costs for businesses.
- Canada seeks to modernize existing chapters in the agreement on market access for goods, rules of origin, institutional provisions and dispute settlement. Canada also seeks to negotiate new chapters in the areas of trade facilitation, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade, intellectual property, e-commerce, labour and the environment.
- Since CIFTA came into force in 1997, Canada's two-way merchandise trade with Israel has more than doubled, to \$1.41 billion in 2012.

Quotes

"Launching these negotiations so quickly after the Prime Minister's historic visit is clear proof that we want to continue to strengthen the Canada-Israel trade and investment relationship to the benefit of Canadians and Israelis alike. An expanded and modernized CIFTA will create new jobs and opportunities for Canadians by improving access to the Israeli market for Canadian producers, manufacturers and exporters."

- *Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade*