



The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A2

Brussels, 10 February 2017

Dear Right Honourable Justin Trudeau,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the heart of European democracy - the European Parliament. The relations between the European Union and Canada enjoy the distinction of being among the very best between any transatlantic partners.

There can be little doubt of the utmost respect we have for your country and your government and we wholeheartedly recognise the importance of strengthening relations with Canada, especially as we also experience some ominous developments in the transatlantic space.

Indeed, we appreciate a lot what your government has done for refugees and for the advancement of diversity and women's rights. We believe we should and we can cooperate to shape globalization in a way that will eradicate poverty, solve the climate crisis, pursue innovation and inclusion and safeguard our democracies.

But all of this won't make us vote in favor of CETA.

The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) is a deal that in its development mirrors some important changes regarding our trade relations. Negotiation at first were not transparent. The European Commission mandate for negotiations was indeed published very late, only in December 2015. Only more recently did the public get a chance to be involved more deeply.

We assume you agree that we have to balance the interest of citizens, consumers, entrepreneurs and workers. We also assume you agree that if negotiations were to start all over again, we might both contribute to a trajectory that looks more ambitiously at finding such a balance.

Obviously, we cannot do the CETA negotiations all over again, so we can but state that the agreement is plagued with considerable faults that could have been avoided if things were done differently from the beginning.

As European Greens, are we going to say yes to CETA because there is no other option? No! We want to clearly state that some old thinking on trade needs to be eradicated still.



In particular the privileges international investors are enjoying thanks to the investors protection rules are unjustified and we cannot support them. We are also deeply concerned about the so-called "ratchet" and "standstill" clauses which for the first time establish that privatizations are irreversible while the public sector is still open for privatization.

We clearly do not share the assumption that markets always work better than the public sector. Experience is on our side here.

So we stick to a NO vote because we want to send a signal: more progress must be made!

We know that on some issues Canada might have been willing to opt for an improvement of the existing text, for instance with regard to the enforcement of workers' rights and environmental commitments. The European Commission did, in our eyes, miss out on some opportunities.

With CETA being a mixed Treaty, it will have to be ratified by all 28 member states, provided it is not ruled incompatible with EU law by the European Court of Justice. For as long as this ratification process has not been completed, the investment protection rules will not apply. That might give both sides, Canada and the EU, some time to reconsider how to build a fair investment protection system that is not tilted towards big corporations, but also enables workers or defendants of the environmental concerns to take corporations to task. We count on you.

We say yes to trade with Canada and yes to an open world. We hope that your country and the EU will be able to team up effectively in the future to build a free and fair multilateral global trading environment that opposes both protectionist nationalism and corporate privilege.

With the expression of our great respect, we remain,
Sincerely yours,

Reinhard Bütikofer, MEP
Co-Chair of the European Green Party

Ska Keller, MEP
Co-President of the Greens/EFA
in the European Parliament

Monica Frassoni
Co-Chair of the European Green Party

Philippe Lamberts, MEP
Co-President of the Greens/EFA
in the European Parliament