



**Meeting of the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee of Ministers on Internal Trade
Ottawa, Ontario - December 5, 2008**

Progress on Labour Mobility and Dispute Resolution Enforcement

OTTAWA, Ontario – December 5, 2008 Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers responsible for Internal Trade met today in Ottawa. Honourable Ida Chong, British Columbia Minister of Technology, Trade and Economic Development and Minister responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative chaired the meeting.

In welcoming Ministers at today's special meeting of the Committee on Internal Trade (CIT), Minister Chong recalled the direction given by Premiers to resolve some of the most challenging issues on the interprovincial trade agenda. This meeting provided the occasion to help fulfill these responsibilities so as to strengthen the Canadian economic union by reducing internal barriers to trade, investment and labour mobility.

The Committee endorsed a report from the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) that includes amendments to the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT) Chapter on Labour Mobility so as to achieve full labour mobility compliance with the AIT, as requested by the Council of the Federation (COF). Ministers approved the text of a Protocol of Amendment to the AIT to give effect to these changes, subject to respective Cabinet approvals. This will lead to the coming into force of these changes effective April 1, 2009. The FLMM will provide CIT with a summary report on implementation of the new Chapter, by the June 2009 CIT meeting.

The Parties acknowledge their continued commitment to the Interprovincial Standards Red Seal Program, as a well-established means of establishing common interprovincial standards for skilled trade occupations.

All AIT Parties, with the exception of Ontario, approved draft text on proposed amendments to the AIT Dispute Resolution Chapter which will significantly strengthen the enforcement mechanisms, including through a more effective compliance process, provision of an appeals process as well as imposition of monetary penalties and suspension of dispute resolution privileges.

A status report on plans to complete negotiations on an AIT Energy Chapter was presented and Ministers agreed to receive the draft energy text at the June 2009 CIT meeting. Ministers received a status report on an action plan on regulatory reform in the transportation sector submitted by Ministers of Transport and Highway Safety. Ministers also look forward to the final draft of a revised Agriculture Chapter expected in 2009. Ministers received an update on progress relating to an economic partnership agreement between Quebec and Ontario.

Lastly, Ministers received a progress report on negotiations commenced with the Government of Nunavut to permit its accession to the AIT by mid 2009.

The Committee will hold its 2009 Annual Meeting on June 16 in Whitehorse under the chairmanship of Yukon Economic Development Minister Jim Kenyon.

Established under the Agreement on Internal Trade (1994), the CIT meets annually to review progress on reducing or eliminating barriers to trade, investment and labour mobility across Canada.

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