
GERMAN TOP COURT BACKS EU-CANADA TRADE DEAL CETA

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BBC

Germany's Constitutional Court has rejected a legal challenge to the EU-Canada free trade deal (CETA) from campaigners who call it undemocratic.

The campaigners object to the fact that parts of CETA will be implemented before all national parliaments in the EU have voted on it.

EU trade ministers are to vote on CETA next week. It requires unanimous support. If they all approve it, the deal can be signed on 27 October.

CETA would remove many trade barriers.

More than 125,000 people signed a petition organised by three activist groups aimed at blocking CETA, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. The groups are Compact, Foodwatch and More Democracy.

Opponents fear that CETA will be used as a model to push through an even more controversial EU-US trade deal called TTIP, much of which remains to be negotiated.

German Economy Minister and Vice-Chancellor Sigmar Gabriel has battled to win his Social Democrats (SPD) round to CETA. The SPD is in government with Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats (CDU), who strongly support CETA.

Many politicians and business leaders argue that CETA will provide a much-needed economic boost, reducing bureaucracy and creating jobs.

At a glance: CETA

- Negotiations began in 2009 and ended in August 2014
- The deal aims to eliminate 98% of tariffs between Canada and EU, making it the EU's most comprehensive trade deal to date
- Signing is expected on 27 October, after which it requires ratification by the European Parliament and national parliaments
- It includes: the new Investment Court System (ICS); harmonised regulations; sustainable development clauses; and access to public sector tenders
- The deal is opposed by various groups, including environmental activists, trade unionists, and Austrian Socialists

Kaynak/Source: