

Beat: Politics

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

European Parliament

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USPA NEWS - "Ceta is not only about commerce, imports and exports, about profits. It aims to improve people's lives," said Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, while addressing MEPs in Strasbourg, one day after the the European Parliament approved the EU-Canada trade agreement.

Welcoming Trudeau, Parliament President Antonio Tajani said: "Canada and Europe share common languages, a history of friendship and a common vision for the future. We share the same vision of an open world and of the need to work together to give concrete answers to the problems of our citizens."

Trudeau's speech in the Parliament, the first one ever by a Canadian Prime Minister, took place one day after MEPs backed Ceta.

"Trade needs to work for people," said Trudeau, addressing concerns that international trade agreements would mainly benefit multinationals and could affect people's jobs. "We live in a time when many people are worried that the current system only benefits society's luckiest few. And their concern is valid," he said. "This anxiety towards the economy and trade can be addressed only if we ensure that trade is inclusive so that everyone benefits. And Ceta delivers just that."

Ceta

Trudeau highlighted the opportunities that Ceta could create: "It's a complete action plan to ensure economic and responsible cooperation between countries."

He said Ceta would make commerce and job creation easier and would also ensure that governments would still be able to protect their citizens, the environment and food safety and good practices in investment..

"With Ceta, together we have built something. Something important. Especially at this moment, on your continent and mine," he said. "If we are successful, Ceta will become the blueprint for all ambitious, future trade deals. If we are not, this could very well be one of the last."

EU- Canada relations

The Canadian Prime Minister praised the relationship between his country and the EU as "a natural, easy relationship grounded in what we have in common" and said: "In these times, we must choose to lead the international economy, not simply be subject to its whims."

A strong EU

Trudeau also singled out the EU as a model. "The European Union is a truly remarkable achievement, and an unprecedented model for peaceful cooperation," he said: "You are a vital player in addressing the challenges that we collectively face as an international community. Indeed, the whole world benefits from a strong EU."

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