Coordinating FTA Negotiations

Submitted by: Canada
Overview

- Organization
- Role of coordinating divisions for FTA negotiations:
  - Exploratory Phase
  - Negotiations
  - Post-conclusion
- Note on Labour and Environment
- Some suggestions
Organization

- Organized into “coordinating” and “functional” divisions to carry out negotiations mandate

- Coordinating divisions: overall strategic management of FTA negotiations – “Secretariats” for negotiations

- Functional divisions: subject matter experts on various areas in trade policy
  - Lead negotiators for individual FTA chapters

Exploratory Phase

- FTA negotiations require significant investment - time and resources

- Preliminary assessment - preparatory work, exchange of information, studies

- Exploratory discussions - determining scope and ambition of a potential FTA, along with modalities for negotiation
Exploratory Phase

- **Role of Coordinating division:**
  - Support Chief Negotiator (briefing material, logistics)
  - Overall management of interaction with partner
  - Point of contact with political level, geographic divisions, other government departments
  - Manage consultation process - Canada Gazette
  - Manage initial environmental assessment process

Communications and stakeholder engagement

- **All phases of FTA cycle, coordinating divisions manage:**
  - Briefings to Ministers
  - Public communications material
  - Federal/Provincial/Territorial relations
  - Private sector engagement
  - Civil society relations and inquiries
  - Advocacy
Exploratory Phase: Negotiating mandate

- If consensus on both sides, final step before official launch of negotiations is the preparation of Canada's negotiating mandate
- Coordinating divisions lead drafting of Memoranda to Cabinet and related Cabinet material

Negotiations: Strategy and meeting logistics

- Develop and update overarching strategy for negotiations
- Work with Chief Negotiator and partner to set agenda and objectives for each round
- Prepare and coordinate detailed briefing materials with all leads
- Meeting logistics
- Post-Round follow up
Negotiations: Institutional chapters and agreement text

- Coordinating divisions lead negotiations on institutional chapters
- After each round, coordinating divisions draft a report summarizing the discussions, and the complete consolidated (bracketed) text of agreement

Post-negotiations: Approval from Cabinet and review of agreement text

- Conclusion of negotiations announcement
- Cabinet Approval
- Legal Scrub
- Translation
Post-negotiations: Implementation process

- Once text is scrubbed, translated, and approved by both sides, it is ready to sign
- Before a signed agreement comes into force, it must go through the legislative process
- Managing an FTA once it is in force

Summary

- Coordinating divisions see the “big picture” and progress of FTA negotiations
- Deeply involved in all steps of FTA negotiations
- A good secretariat is key to any negotiation
- FTA coordinators need to possess a range of skill sets, be organized, diplomatic and be able to handle steady pressure on many fronts