《欧盟与加拿大“破冰”签署自由贸易协定》

导读:欧盟领导人和加拿大总理分别代表双方签署协议，这标志着双方的战略合作又上一层楼。

The European Union and Canada signed a long-delayed landmark free trade agreement Sunday in Brussels aimed to boost growth and jobs.

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Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau signed the Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) along with the heads of EU institutions (EU President Donald Tusk, European Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker and Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico, whose country holds the rotating EU presidency).

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The signing ceremony had been pushed back from Thursday after French-speaking Wallonia, with just 3.6 million people, initially vetoed an agreement affecting more than 500 million Europeans and 35 million Canadians.

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The EU requires unanimity among its 28 members and Belgium needed the backing of all its regions to approve the agreement.

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The start of Sunday’s summit was also delayed when Trudeau’s plane was briefly forced to return to Canada due to mechanical problems.

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CETA will remove 99 percent of customs duties between Canada and the 28-member European bloc, linking the single EU market with the world’s 10th largest economy.

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CETA is expected to boost EU trade with Canada by $13.2 billion (12 billion euros) a year, creating economic growth and jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

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The EU insists that the deal will not prevent governments from taking measures to protect environmental and social standards if they believe action is needed, despite concerns in Wallonia and elsewhere that big companies would have free rein.

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The EU-Canada deal has drawn widespread protests from anti-globalization "Stop CETA" activists who have said it would undermine local industries and standards for healthcare and other issues.

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Sunday a small number of protesters gathered outside the European Council building banging drums and shouting anti-CETA slogans. Some demonstrators broke through police lines and put red paint on the glass doors of the building. Police took away about dozen people, but did not break up the protest.

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