

# Canada PM Tells Italy PM Important to Conclude Canada-EU Trade Deal

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OTTAWA--Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, in a telephone conversation with his Italian counterpart Monday, discussed the importance of concluding a free-trade agreement between Canada and the European Union, according to a read-out of the conversation issued by Mr. Harper's office.

Canadian negotiators are in Brussels trying to hammer out a deal that's been almost four years in the making. The window for concluding a pact is narrowing as Brussels gets ready to shift its attention to the U.S., a much bigger prize. The EU-U.S. talks are expected to be formally launched in June.

Mr. Harper spoke with Enrico Letta, the new Italian Prime Minister, and "underscored the importance of concluding an ambitious" free-trade pact "that would create jobs, growth and long-term prosperity in Canada and the European Union," the statement said.

They also discussed the euro-zone crisis and the Italian and global economies, according to the statement.

Mr. Harper and Mr. Letta will be meeting at the Summit of Group of Eight leaders in Northern Ireland June 17-18, the statement said.