

# Canada says trade deal with European Union is likely

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OTTAWA — Trade Minister Peter Van Loan says it is becoming increasingly likely that Canada will reach a comprehensive trade agreement with the European Union.

The trade minister says he had expected difficult negotiations but they have progressed better than expected.

Van Loan and his European counterpart, Karel De Gucht, have agreed to proceed with the talks after receiving assessments from their chief negotiators.

Both say the difficult issues, particularly access to provincial government procurement and agricultural subsidies, have yet to be settled, but that talks are ahead of schedule.

The two sides have set an end of 2011 date for concluding a deal.