ANNEX

JOINT STATEMENT BY CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION ON ACCESS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION OF SEAL PRODUCTS FROM INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF CANADA

to the

COMMISSION DECISION

ON THE JOINT STATEMENT BY CANADA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION ON ACCESS TO THE EUROPEAN UNION OF SEAL PRODUCTS FROM INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES OF CANADA
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PURPOSE
This joint statement sets out the framework for cooperation to enable access to the European Union of seal products that result from hunts traditionally conducted by Canadian indigenous communities and which contribute to their subsistence.

INTRODUCTION
Having regard to the values, interests, culture, and traditions of indigenous communities; Recognising that the hunting of seals by indigenous communities of Canada has been an integral part of their tradition, culture, and identity since time immemorial and that they rely on the seal hunt for the direct necessities of life and to sustain their communities economically through the income it generates; Recalling that the European Union's regulations on trade in seal products seek to ensure that the fundamental economic and social interests of indigenous communities which hunt seals for their subsistence will not be adversely affected; Canada and the European Union confirm the following:

PRINCIPLES
An expert group representing the two sides will work expeditiously towards the establishment of the administrative arrangements required for access to the European Union, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, of seal products that result from hunts traditionally conducted by Canadian indigenous communities and which contribute to their subsistence. When doing so, both sides will be guided by the following principles:

– the particularities and special challenges of establishing an attestation system for seal products from Canadian indigenous communities should be taken into consideration;
– the attestation conditions for seal products from Canadian indigenous communities will be no less favourable than those which have been and will be applied to seal products from any other indigenous community which obtain or seek access for seal products to the European Union;
– nothing should prevent the participation of Canadian non-indigenous persons and entities processing, manufacturing, and marketing Canadian indigenous seal products;
– the placing on the market of seal products that result from hunts traditionally conducted by Canadian indigenous communities and which contribute to their subsistence should not be limited based on the type of seal products or the purpose for which the product is imported to the European Union from Canada; and,
– the European Commission will take appropriate measures to inform competent authorities, including customs officials, in the Member States of the European Union regarding market access of seal products from Canadian indigenous communities that meet the conditions for import into the European Union.
With the aim of enabling access to the European Union of seal products from Canadian indigenous communities as soon as possible, Canada will endeavour to provide, at its earliest convenience, the information necessary to enable the European Commission to complete its assessment of the attestation system in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The European Commission will endeavour to complete this assessment expeditiously.

SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Recognising the importance of preserving the traditional way of life of indigenous communities, including their ability to benefit from the indigenous exemption, while at the same time enabling them to benefit from economic development, the two sides will:

– pursue discussions on possible participation by Canadian partners in the new European Union Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme;
– explore possibilities for supporting indigenous communities and traditional ways of life through capacity building and exchange of best practices;
– explore how indigenous communities can benefit from the new opportunities to be opened up by the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, to develop their economic, social, and environmental potential;
– explore how bilateral European Union-Canada research cooperation, including the incorporation of traditional knowledge, can bring benefits relevant to indigenous communities;
– identify other areas of mutual interest where exchange of expertise and dialogue could benefit indigenous communities, including the marketing of traditional products; and,
– continue to engage in regular dialogue with representatives of indigenous communities, with a view to increasing mutual understanding.

This joint statement is without prejudice to any measures taken by the European Union to implement the findings and recommendations of the World Trade Organization Panel and the Appellate Body in the disputes European Communities - Measures Prohibiting the Importation and Marketing of Seal Products, WT/DS400 and WT/DS401.