

CHINA

Canadians Urge for Focus on Human Rights as Prime Minister Visits China

Two-thirds of respondents think Canada should not seek free trade agreements with countries that have dubious human rights records.

[TORONTO – Dec. 2, 2009] – As Prime Minister Stephen Harper arrives in China for a four-day visit, a large majority of Canadians believe the federal government should concentrate on human rights when it comes to bilateral ties, a new Angus Reid Public Opinion poll has found.

In the online survey of a representative national sample of 1,006 Canadian adults, 63 per cent of respondents believe Canada should put more emphasis on human rights and minority rights, regardless of the economic implications.

Just over a third of respondents (37%) believe Canada's long-term policy with China should focus on the trading relationship, regardless of the human rights situation in China.

While those concerned primarily with human rights in China continue to outnumber the proponents of trade, this month's survey does show a 13-point shift towards trade since an Angus Reid poll conducted in April 2007, when the trial and sentence of Chinese Canadian Huseyin Celil dominated the airwaves.

Two-thirds of Canadians (68%) believe Canada should not seek free trade agreements with developing countries that have dubious human rights records. The level of agreement with this

KEY FINDINGS

- **63% believe human rights and minority rights are more important than the trading relationship when it comes to China**
- **68% think Canada should not seek free trade agreements with developing countries that have dubious human rights records**
- **42% believe free trade with China would represent a threat to the Canadian economy; 37% regard it as an opportunity**

Full topline results are at the end of this release.

From December 1 to December 2, 2009, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among 1,006 randomly selected Canadian adults who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 3.1%. The results have been statistically weighted according to the most current education, age, gender and region Census data to ensure samples representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 604-647-3570, mario.canseco@angus-reid.com

notion has dropped by five points since July 2007, when Canada was discussing a free trade agreement with Colombia.

The prospect of a free trade deal with China is not an overwhelmingly popular idea for Canadians, with 42 per cent perceiving this possibility as a threat to the Canadian economy from foreign imports, and 37 per cent believing it would be an opportunity for economic growth through increased Canadian exports.

Albertans are more likely to perceive free trade with China as an opportunity (52%) while Quebecers (48%) are more likely to regard it as a threat.

Analysis

While trade with China has become a more important issue in the past two years, a majority of Canadians continue to advocate for an emphasis on human rights. China, at this point, is seen as more of a threat in the field of international commerce, a perception that is very different from the perceived benefits a free trade deal with India would bring to Canada.

CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 604-647-3570, mario.canseco@angus-reid.com

China							
In terms of Canada's long-term policy with China, where do you think we should place more emphasis?							
Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
On the trading relationship, regardless of the human rights situation in China	37%	43%	43%	44%	33%	33%	42%
On human rights and minority rights, regardless of the economic implications	63%	57%	57%	56%	67%	67%	58%

China - TREND		
In terms of Canada's long-term policy with China, where do you think we should place more emphasis?		
	Dec. 2009	Apr. 2007
On the trading relationship, regardless of the human rights situation in China	37%	24%
On human rights and minority rights, regardless of the economic implications	63%	76%

CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 604-647-3570, mario.canseco@angus-reid.com

China							
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? – “Canada should not seek free trade agreements with developing countries that have dubious human rights records.”							
Region							
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Agree	68%	64%	67%	63%	71%	68%	61%
Disagree	23%	27%	27%	29%	20%	21%	28%
Not sure	9%	8%	6%	8%	9%	11%	10%

China - TREND		
Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? – “Canada should not seek free trade agreements with developing countries that have dubious human rights records.”		
	Dec. 2009	Jul. 2007
Agree	68%	73%
Disagree	23%	21%
Not sure	9%	5%

CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 604-647-3570, mario.canseco@angus-reid.com

China							
Which of these statements comes closest to your own point of view?							
	Region						
	Total	BC	AB	MB/SK	ON	PQ	ATL
Free trade with China would represent an opportunity for economic growth through increased Canadian exports	37%	37%	52%	38%	37%	28%	44%
Free trade with China would represent a threat to the Canadian economy from foreign imports	42%	37%	29%	32%	46%	48%	39%
Not sure	21%	27%	19%	30%	17%	24%	17%

CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 604-647-3570, mario.canseco@angus-reid.com

Angus Reid Public Opinion is a practice of Vision Critical—a global research and technology company specializing in custom online panels, private communities, and innovative online methods. Vision Critical is a leader in the use of the Internet and rich media technology to collect high-quality, in-depth insights for a wide array of clients. Dr. Angus Reid and the Angus Reid Public Opinion team are pioneers in online research methodologies, and have been conducting online surveys since 1995

Vision Critical is now one of the largest market research enterprises in the world. In addition to its five offices in Canada—located in Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Toronto, and Montreal—the firm also has offices in San Francisco, Chicago, New York, London, Paris and Sydney. Its team of specialists provides solutions across every type and sector of research, and currently serves over 200 international clients.

Angus Reid Public Opinion polls are conducted using the Angus Reid Forum (www.angusreidforum.com), Springboard America (www.springboardamerica.com) and Springboard UK (www.springboarduk.com) online panels, which are carefully recruited to ensure representation across all demographic and psychographic segments of these populations. Panel members pass through rigorous screening and a double opt-in process ensuring highly motivated and responsive members. These premier online survey platforms present respondents with highly visual, interactive, and engaging surveys, ensuring that panel members provide thoughtful and reliable responses. Each survey is actively sampled and weighted to model that characteristics of the universe required and employs the latest in quality control techniques to ensure data validity.

Angus Reid, the only public opinion firm to exclusively use online methods to follow the views of the electorate during the 2008 federal campaign, offered the most accurate prediction of the results of Canada's 40th election.

<http://bit.ly/4zxf1S>

Since 2006, Angus Reid has covered eight provincial elections in Canada—more than any other pollster in the country—and the results have accurately predicted the outcome of each of these democratic processes.

More information on the way Angus Reid conducts public opinion research can be found at

<http://bit.ly/3z0u1l>

- 30 -

**For more information, please contact
our spokesperson listed in the footnote.**

Copies of this poll are available on our website:

<http://www.visioncritical.com/category/global-opinions-and-trends>

CONTACT:

Mario Canseco, Vice President, Public Affairs, 604-647-3570, mario.canseco@angus-reid.com