

Stop Marketing Canadian Seal Products to China

A Letter to Canadian Government, Canadian Sealing Industry and Canadian People

January 10, 2012

We are animal protection groups across the Chinese mainland representing tens of millions of supporters who are concerned with the nation's economic and moral development. With the opening of the 38th Beijing International Fur and Leather Product Expo, we would like to appeal to you, Canadian government, Canadian sealing industry and Canadian citizens, to stop marketing cruel seal products to China. Promoting seal products to the Chinese people who are building a morally progressive society will do a lot of harm to the normal trade ties between our two countries.

China's animal protection cause has a lot to improve. We have never lost sight of this fact. Yet, China's shortcomings in this regard should be the motivation for the international community to join us to improve animal protection work in our country. China's problems in animal protection can never be used by anyone, be it foreign businesses or foreign governments, to market internationally condemned products of animal cruelty to the Chinese people.

Canada is a great country. Dr. Norman Bethune, a renowned international humanitarian, commands the respect of the Chinese. He embraced the Chinese people with a heart of compassion at a time when they were suffering. Today, Mark Roswell, an entertainer known as Dashan and arguably the most famous foreigner in China, is the most popular Canadian. We have a hard time to connect the Canada of Dr. Bethune and Mr. Roswell with the one that brutalizes baby seals. We welcome Canadians like Dr. Bethune and Mr. Roswell. We do not welcome those who slaughter seals and market seal products to China. Canadian fisheries officials and seal salespeople have come to China several times in order to promote seal trade. You are doing a big damage to the reputation of Canada.

In the last two years, Canada has stepped up efforts to promote seal trade with China. Rising condemnation from the international community and the EU trade ban on seal products in 2009 have dealt a heavy blow to Canadian sealing industry. Since November 2010, the Chinese people have engaged in a nationwide campaign against seal trade. On March 13, 2011, activists from across mainland China converged in Beijing to jump start a new round of campaign against seal trade. On March 29, the China International Chamber of Commerce and Beijing Capital Animal Welfare Association co-sponsored a forum titled "Resist Seal Trade, Protect Animals and Promote Green Trade." The attendees agreed that seal trade runs counter to China's moral progress; sends a wrong message to consumers; encourages immoral economic activities; and despises the global efforts for ecological protection. Campaigns against seal trade were launched in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Xiamen and Dalian. College students in Shandong and Guangdong participated in petitions. We call for your attention on the survival of China's

state protected spotted seals that have fewer than 1000 individuals in the wild. Seal trade would only encourage illegal hunting of this endangered species and lead to its extinction.

We therefore appeal to you, Canadian government and sealing industry, to stop marketing seal products to China. If Canada insists on promoting seal product to China, the Chinese people will act accordingly.

On the eve of the Year of the Dragon, we would like to send to Canadian people our most sincere greetings. It is our hope that you will stand on the side of morality and justice. We hope you will work to end seal slaughter once and for all.

We would also like to call for the attention of seal slaughterers and their marketing agents to pack up and leave China immediately.

The Chinese people do not welcome seal products. China does not need seal trade.

Co-signing this letter:

Beijing Capital Animal Welfare Association

China Animal Protection Journalist Salon

Panjing Spotted Seals Protection Volunteer Association

Beijing Green Beagle Environmental Studies Institute

And 35 other groups