

Canada to appeal U.S. softwood ruling

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QUEBEC — Minister of National Revenue Jean-Pierre Blackburn said Tuesday the federal government will appeal the U.S. decision to impose a duty on Canadian lumber imports.

The United States imposed a 10 per cent duty on some imports of Canadian lumber last Thursday after Ottawa failed to abide by a trade tribunal ruling.

"We are challenging the 10 per cent decision at the arbitration tribunal," Blackburn told a news conference in Quebec City where he was unveiling details of a plan to help the ailing forestry sector.

"It's going to take 60 or 90 days — we hope it's going to be 60 days — but meanwhile our Canadian companies are penalized," he added.

The U.S. said the duty will remain until it collects \$54.8 million U.S.. A month ago, the LCIA tribunal (formerly the London Court of International Arbitration) said Canada had miscalculated lumber quotas from Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba for six months in 2007, allowing producers to ship too much.

Canada is not disputing the LCIA decision, but would have preferred to work with the U.S. to find a solution.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper said last week he was "disappointed" by the decision to impose duties.