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McDOUGALL TO ATTEND LISBON CO-ORDINATING CONFERENCE ON ASSISTANCE TO THE COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Barbara McDougall, today announced that she will attend the Lisbon Conference on Economic Assistance to the Countries of the Former Soviet Union (FSU), May 23-24. While in Portugal, the Minister will also hold regular Canada-European Community (EC) bilateral consultations.

The Lisbon Conference is the second ministerial meeting on assistance to the FSU. The first was held in January, in Washington.

"The Washington Conference succeeded in focusing the efforts of the international community on helping the FSU through a winter of shortages and economic hardship. Now we must look to the longer term," said Mrs. McDougall. "The priority is reform that will prevent a recurrence of such an emergency next year. The co-operation and co-ordination evident since Washington show that the international community is committed in the long term to supporting reforms and reformers in the region."

Since the Washington Conference, the countries of the FSU have been accepted into the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. They have been invited to attend, and will have the opportunity to address, the Lisbon meeting. Mrs. McDougall will speak in her capacity as Co-chair of the Working Group on Food.

On May 24, Mrs. McDougall will meet with Portuguese Foreign Minister Pinheiro (in Portugal's capacity as President of the European Community) and European Commission Vice-President Andriessen for the latest in a regular series of Ministerial Consultations under the provisions of the Declaration on EC-Canada Relations.

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