

duty or trade sanction. "The agreements guarantee that no new trade barriers will be erected against Canada under the NAFTA," Mr. Hockin said. "Under these agreements Canada will never be subject to trade sanctions."

The precedent-setting agreements commit all three countries to close and ongoing co-operation on a broad variety of environmental and labour issues. These agreements build upon the already strong commitments to work together that were negotiated in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAFTA and the side agreements are scheduled to come into force on January 1, 1994.

The agreements mark the first time that developed nations have pledged to work with a developing country on common environmental and labour goals in conjunction with a trade agreement. The agreements are based on the premise of domestic enforcement of domestic laws. The side agreements respect each country's sovereignty as well as provincial jurisdiction.

Canada negotiated the side agreement on environmental co-operation to create a Commission on Environmental Co-operation; strengthen environmental co-operation among Canada, the United States and Mexico; address and resolve disputes; promote sustainable development; and increase co-operation in the development and enforcement of environmental regulations.

The Commission will promote a work plan based on priority areas, including limits on specific pollutants, assessing projects with transboundary implications and reciprocal court access. As well, the Commission will co-operate with the Free Trade Commission to achieve the environmental goals of the NAFTA.

"This environmental agreement marks a milestone in our progress toward global sustainable development," Environment Minister Pierre H. Vincent said. "It creates a firm foundation for greater co-operation and a healthier environment in our three countries."

On labour, Canada is satisfied the agreement will give effect to the commitments in the NAFTA Preamble to "improve working conditions and living standards" in all three countries, and to "protect, enhance and enforce basic workers' rights."

"This agreement achieves Canada's long-standing objective to have labour issues addressed in the context of the North American Free Trade Agreement," said Minister Bernard Valcourt. "As federal Minister of Human Resources and Labour, my concern is to protect the interests of Canadian workers. The North American Agreement on Labour Co-operation protects our own labour standards and respects our sovereignty as a nation. The agreement provides an open window on labour market aspects of trade between Canada, the