

## QUADRILATERAL TRADE MINISTERS MEETINGS

### BACKGROUND

Ministers responsible for International Trade of the United States, the European Community, Japan and Canada have met on a regular basis (about three times a year) since 1982. The last Quadrilateral meeting took place in Kyoto (Japan) at the beginning of February 1985. Earlier meetings were held in Key Biscayne ( Florida), Versailles, Tokyo, Brussels, London, Ottawa, Islamorada(Florida), and Erbach(West Germany).

The idea of ministerial discussions on trade was first raised during the preparations for the 1981 Ottawa Economic Summit, against the background of the experience developed during recent multilateral trade negotiations (Kennedy Round and Tokyo Round). The first Quadrilateral Trade Meeting was held in January 1982 at the initiative of the United States Trade Representative, Mr. William Brock. The objective was to provide an opportunity for informal discussions among the participants on international trade and trade-related economic developments, and trade prospects and problems of common interest.

During three days of informal meetings, the Ministers and their officials will review the international trading situation and the issues involved. They are expected in particular to discuss preparations for the new GATT round of multilateral trade negotiations including the timing, the objectives, the substance, and the modalities for the negotiations.