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MAJOR TRADE INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP NEW EXPORTS TO WESTERN EUROPE

The Honourable Gerald Regan, Minister of State (International Trade), announced a major trade initiative today by the Department of External Affairs to develop new exports to Western Europe. This programme will bring the expertise available from our Embassies and consulates in Europe directly to the Canadian export community. As part of this initiative, 24 Trade Commissioners from Western Europe will participate in a series of workshops and seminars throughout Canada and will be available for individual meetings with businessmen in order to discuss specific opportunities or to assist companies in developing an export strategy.

Mr. Regan emphasized that this programme will be undertaken with the full cooperation of Canadian industry and will have a country-wide focus. The programme will be organized jointly with the Canadian Manufacturers' Association and will take place from January 27 to February 4. To meet with exporters, teams of Trade Commissioners will travel to St. John's, Moncton, Halifax, Charlottetown, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

Mr. Regan pointed out that Western Europe is now Canada's second largest foreign market after the U.S.A. Since 1978, Canadian sales have doubled, reaching \$10 billion and have continued to be characterized by the increasing importance of end products and processed materials. At the same time, Western Europe has grown in importance to Canada as a source of investment and technology and as an intermediary for sales into other markets. These developments have been facilitated by a number of agreements with the European Community, governments of individual countries and at the private sector level. Notwithstanding these developments, however, Mr. Regan concluded that commercial ties with Europe have ample scope for further expansion.