

NOTES FOR THE OPENING REMARKS
BY THE HONOURABLE JOHN C. CROSBIE
AT THE SCEAIT MEETING - MAY 25, 1989

I would like to thank you for this early opportunity to meet with you and to provide you with a short overview of our international trade priorities and programs. I hope that our discussions will cover not only the financial resource questions related to the estimates, but will also extend to directions we are following with respect to trade policy and trade development. Your views and input will be appreciated.

Let me introduce the officials who are with me today. Gerry Shannon, Deputy Minister; Don Campbell, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for the U.S.; Reg Dorrett, Assistant Deputy Minister for International Trade Development; John Paynter, Assistant Deputy Minister for Economic and Commercial Policy; Germain Denis, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Multilateral Trade Negotiations; Len Edwards, Director General for Corporate Management.

As many of you are aware, this government embarked upon a two track trade strategy in 1985 and our objectives were established by first ministers. The first track was the negotiations with the U.S. The second track is Canada's participation in the Uruguay Round. The national trade strategy encompassed three major areas of effort. We wanted then and now:

To secure and enhance access to foreign markets; to improve our trade competitiveness; and to develop and strengthen our international marketing efforts.

I will deal with all aspects of our joint strategy and how we have been implementing that strategy. However, our discussions today should focus on where we go from here.

First and foremost the FTA is a reality and it is working. Access to the largest national market in the world has been secured. The machinery to implement the agreement is in place and running. And the business sector has been quick in capitalizing on its benefits and has even come forward with proposals to accelerate its implementation.

No agreement of this magnitude can be without the need for some fine tuning and some adjustments. I understand that you will spend some time later with my senior Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for relations with the U.S., Don Campbell, and other officials on the specifics of the FTA.

Let me turn to the second track of our trade policy strategy: the Uruguay Round.