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MINISTER WILSON TO LEAD MIDDLE EAST TRADE MISSION

Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade Michael Wilson will lead a 29-member business delegation to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the United Arab Emirates, May 1-8, to strengthen Canada's trade and commercial ties with the region.

Meetings with senior government officials and business leaders are scheduled for May 4 in Riyadh, Jeddah on May 5, Kuwait City on May 6, Abu Dhabi on May 7, and Dubai on May 8.

"Canada's participation in the Gulf War and in the Kuwait reconstruction effort has focused our attention on a region of the world which is a natural partner for Canadian business," Mr. Wilson said. He noted that Canadian exports of goods and services to the Middle East more than doubled between 1985 and 1990 to reach \$1.6 billion.

"This mission will follow up on the extremely successful mission led by former Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark in March. It is the kind of continuity that is needed to firmly establish Canada's relationship with government and business leaders in the region -- a relationship that holds enormous potential."

Saudi Arabia offers a wide range of opportunities for Canadian exporters from barley and lumber through oil and gas equipment to highly advanced telecommunications technology. Currently there are some 50 project opportunities being pursued, with an estimated value to Canadian exporters of several billion dollars.

Kuwait posted Canadian export sales of \$34 million in 1990, almost double the sales of 1989. Kuwaiti reconstruction