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CANADA-EC MINISTERS TO MEET

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, and International Trade Minister, John C. Crosbie, announced today that they will hold talks in Ottawa on May 24 and 25 with Frans Andriessen, senior Vice-President of the Commission of the European Communities (EC) and Commissioner for External Relations and Trade Policy. Mr. Andriessen will also meet Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Among the issues to be discussed are Canada-EC relations, including overfishing in the Northwest Atlantic, Canada-EC relations, and recent political and economic developments in Europe.

"The European Community is a valued ally and trading partner," stated Mr. Clark. "With the further integration of the EC in 1992 and with the rapid changes taking place in Central and Eastern Europe, it is vital that we maintain an on-going dialogue with the EC so that we can pursue not only our economic interests in the Community, but also our political and security interests throughout Europe."

In addition to this dialogue with the EC, Mr. Clark cited Canada's participation in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, assistance programs for Central and Eastern Europe, and Canada's membership in the new European Bank for Reconstruction and Development as examples of Canada's continuing commitment to an active involvement in Europe.

Mr. Crosbie said that economic and commercial relations with the EC and other economic issues, particularly the multilateral trade negotiations under the GATT, would be the focus of his talks with Mr. Andriessen. "We have worked hard with Canadian business to prepare for EC integration in 1992. We have held symposia across Canada and sponsored studies identifying key markets in Europe. We want to make sure that Canadians can take advantage of the opportunities created by Europe 1992."

He said that overfishing in the Northwest Atlantic would also be discussed. "In recent talks with the EC Fisheries Commissioner, Manuel Marin, we were encouraged by his commitment to conservation and we intend to work constructively with the Community on this issue," said Mr. Crosbie.