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MACLAREN ESTABLISHES TASK FORCES TO ADVISE ON TRADE ISSUES

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, announced today the establishment of three permanent task forces of the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) to provide in-depth advice on trade issues. The new task forces are on trade policy, international business development and trade and the environment.

The ITAC Task Force on Trade Policy will examine domestic and international factors that affect Canada's international competitiveness and recommend how Canada can best address these issues within the multilateral trading system.

The ITAC Task Force on International Business Development will examine Canada's performance in the global economy and the challenges, plans and initiatives of both industry and government in promoting international business expansion. It will make specific recommendations to improve Canada's competitiveness.

The ITAC Task Force on Trade and the Environment will examine factors that affect the achievement and reconciliation of Canadian trade and environmental objectives.

"Canadians need to co-operate and work toward a common agenda to meet the competitive challenges of the global economy," Mr. MacLaren said. "These new task forces will be instrumental in building a consensus on the progressive and outward-looking approach we need to defend and promote Canada's interests."

The task forces will complement the existing advisory committee system that is composed of the ITAC and 15 Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs).

The ITAC and SAGITs report to the Minister to ensure that the Government has the benefit of private sector views in its deliberations on trade issues.

Each task force comprises members of the ITAC and SAGITs as well as other representatives of industry, labour, business, academia