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POTENTIAL \$1 TRILLION GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT MARKET ABROAD MAY BE OPENED TO CANADIAN SUPPLIERS

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie says Canada could win access to more than \$1 trillion worth of government business worldwide under an offer made today at General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations in Geneva.

Standing to benefit substantially from this initiative are Canadian suppliers of advanced technology products and services in such sectors as telecommunications, power generation and transmission equipment, as well as computer services, software and construction services.

"Canada has a unique opportunity through these negotiations to enhance significantly further competitive opportunities under the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and to share in the benefits of the market liberalization entailed in Europe's 1992 single-market integration," Mr. Crosbie said.

The Canadian offer responds to the initiatives of the European Community, the U.S. and Japan to negotiate the comprehensive liberalization of government procurement contracts above certain thresholds in the areas of non-defence goods, construction and some other services. Most other members of the GATT are not signatories to the Government Procurement Code.

The scope of the negotiations extends potentially to all government departments and agencies of central, state/provincial, regional and local governments.