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## SPEECH IN NEW YORK BY MINISTER JAMES KELLEHER

The Minister for International Trade, James Kelleher, told a group of 400 senior American business executives in New York City that Canada is ready to negotiate a trade agreement with the United States. Mr. Kelleher said he was very pleased that President Reagan has notified Congress of the Administration's intention to engage in bilateral trade talks with Canada.

"The significance of this initiative, and of the President's action yesterday, cannot be overstated. These bilateral trade negotiations will, I believe, be of historic importance for both the United States and Canada, and I look forward to getting them underway soon," Mr. Kelleher said.

Minister Kelleher also made the following points to the United States Council for International Business:

- The agreement reached recently "in Halifax by the Prime Minister and all the provincial premiers in no way diminishes the primacy of the federal government. What it does is recognize the unique and special character of the Canadian federation. It will serve as a mechanism to ensure that our negotiators are kept aware of provincial interests, and that an eventual trade agreement will have the support of all provinces."
- "Our bilingual character, our social programs and our culture are all part of what we Canadians regard as our unique identity. They are part of what makes us Canadians, and they are not at issue in the negotiations we will hold."

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