

Germany and France, International Trade Minister Crosbie attended four meetings in the Asia-Pacific region last November. A new agricultural reform proposal was agreed at a meeting of Cairns Group Ministers in Chiangmai, Thailand. When Quadrilateral trade ministers from the USA, the EC, Japan and Canada met in Hakone, Japan, and subsequently in Tokyo with Ministers from some 23 other developed and developing countries, their attention focussed on the management of the MTN process and on the essential elements for a comprehensive package of results that would be balanced and equitable for all MTN participants. They emphasized their commitment to seeking a large MTN result and to having the negotiations completed as scheduled next December.

6. In this regard, the United States Trade Representative clearly indicated that the Administration had made the MTN the highest priority on its trade policy agenda. The USA is determined to complete the MTN in December because, under its current trade negotiating authority, it needs to notify Congress by March 1991 of its intention to enter into new trade agreements. It also needs to submit all the MTN legal agreements, together with the detailed legislative implementation package, to Congress no later than June 1991. For its part, the European Community, with its 1992 single market integration program underway and its focus on developments in Eastern Europe, continues to indicate its full commitment to the Uruguay Round and to the GATT as the primary vehicle with respect to its trade relationship with third countries (see Annex I). A Canadian perspective on the MTN and the Atlantic Rim in the global trading environment is also provided in Annex II.

7. The MTN ministerial activities in Japan and Thailand were preceded by the Canberra meeting on Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) where the important contribution of a substantial MTN result for enhanced trade and investment opportunities in the region was emphasized. Participants at the Canberra meeting (Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, the USA, and Canada) accepted Canada's suggestion to maintain a strong Asia-Pacific focus during the final year of the MTN by having APEC ministers in charge of the trade negotiations meet next September as well as just prior to the concluding Brussels MTN conference next December. Canada's proposal to arrange regular consultations in Geneva between MTN delegations of APEC countries to support this APEC Ministerial process was also agreed. A first such meeting was chaired by Canada on the occasion of the last Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) meeting in Geneva in late December.