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CANADA'S TRADE MINISTER PRESSES TO FINISH URUGUAY ROUND ON SCHEDULE

Geneva -- The Canadian Minister for International Trade, John C. Crosbie, emphasized today the importance of concluding the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations on schedule, the week of December 3 in Brussels.

"A postponement of the Brussels meeting would only defer difficult decisions which must be addressed," Mr. Crosbie said. "The last Round of trade negotiations concluded over 11 years ago and we have been working on this Round for over four years. The time is long past to agree on the reforms that the world trading system clearly needs."

As part of the effort to move negotiations forward, Mr. Crosbie met with U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills and GATT Director-General Arthur Dunkel, and has held discussions with Ministers from other key countries. Mr. Crosbie also met with Ministers from the 13 other agricultural exporting countries of the "Cairns Group" to discuss how to unblock negotiations on agriculture.

Mr. Crosbie stated: "While the Uruguay Round has made good progress over recent years in advancing negotiations in all areas and identifying key issues for decision, it is obvious that the delay in receiving an offer on agriculture from the EC has affected the pace of negotiations in the Round. Without a satisfactory result in the agricultural negotiations, the prospects of a successful outcome to negotiations in all other areas of the Round are non-existent."

Mr. Crosbie expressed his support for the efforts by Arthur Dunkel to push the negotiations forward and reconfirmed Canada's commitment to work on all fronts. "I am convinced that all the elements are on the table for a big result and I have encouraged my counterparts to take a positive role in advancing the negotiations," the Minister said.