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TRADE SUMMIT PLANS, BUSINESS DEALS CONCLUDE BUSINESSWOMEN'S TRADE MISSION

International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi announced in Washington today that a Canada-U.S. International Women's Trade Summit will be held in Toronto in May 1999, building on work by a new research coalition of public and private sector groups.

Mr. Marchi also witnessed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Women Entrepreneurs of Canada Foundation and the National Foundation of Women Business Owners, a U.S. group. The Canada-U.S. alliance will ensure binational co-operation in the research coalition and trade summit.

"The women's trade summit and the research coalition are key steps in getting more firms led by women involved in Canada-U.S. trade," said Mr. Marchi. "This is bound to lead to increased business between our two countries. And these initiatives should help the Government of Canada design improved export services for women as they compete in international markets."

"This summit will strengthen the already dynamic relationship between women entrepreneurs on both sides of the border," said Aida Alvarez, Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration. "The Small Business Administration's goal is to increase small business opportunities in the international market, and we hope this summit will enhance our already strong links with Canada."

The research coalition recognizes the need for better information in Canada on the role of women entrepreneurs in domestic and international markets. The first international Conference on Women Entrepreneurs at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development in Paris in April 1997 underlined the importance to all member governments of better understanding the role of women entrepreneurs in the economy, international trade and job creation.

Along with developing improved information, the new coalition of governments, businesses and universities will lay the groundwork for the Toronto women's trade summit. It will be steered by

