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# MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Ministers of the GATT Contracting Parties, including Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark, met at Punta del Este, Uruguay, this past September to launch a new round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN). The eventual results of these negotiations will establish the rules for global trade into the 21st century.

The MTN represents both a challenge and an opportunity for Canada to find forward-looking solutions to the current and emerging problems facing the international trading community. Canada approaches the Uruguay Round with a sense of urgency, determined to fight protectionist threats, to enhance the rule of law in international trade and to restore the momentum towards further trade liberalization.

The Ministerial Declaration at Punta del Este demonstrated the participating countries' commitment to the process and outlined the challenging negotiating agenda. The Declaration:

- greatly strengthens the commitment to stop the introduction of new protectionist measures and promote policies which will remove barriers to trade (standstill and rollback);
- includes for the first time specific objectives for across-the-board negotiations on agriculture, which embrace not only improved market access but the application of multilateral disciplines to the use of all direct and indirect subsidies and other measures which distort trade;
- aims to reduce or eliminate tariff and non-tariff barriers, in order to improve market access conditions;
- includes "new issues" such as trade in service, intellectual property, trade-related investment measures;
- specifies a series of institution-building and rule-making measures to reinforce and extend the mandate of the GATT.

Canada is determined to play a constructive role in the MTN to lower global trade barriers and create more transparent and effective rules of the game. It is important for Canada to have a strong functional GATT that is credible both to trading countries and to businessmen involved in trade. To this end Canada will be working with its Summit partners to construct means of strengthening the GATT system and reinforcing its effectiveness.