

News Release

November 6, 1997

No. 180

MARCHI TO LEAD BUSINESSWOMEN'S TRADE MISSION AND HOLD BILATERAL TALKS IN WASHINGTON-NEW YORK TRIP

International Trade Minister Sergio Marchi will lead a groundbreaking trade mission of around 120 businesswomen to Washington from November 12 to 14 in an effort to increase the number of firms led by women exporting to the lucrative U.S. market.

"There is great potential for increasing Canadian exports among firms headed by women," said Mr. Marchi. "Women head about one-third of Canadian companies, employing about 1.7 million people and creating jobs at a rate of four times the national average. This is a key sector we are targeting in our effort to double the number of exporters by the year 2000."

The three-day Canadian Businesswomen's International Trade Mission is designed to introduce potential exporters to the U.S. market and, specifically, to explore business opportunities and form partnerships in the mid-Atlantic states of Maryland, Virginia, eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and the District of Columbia. Canadian exports there amounted to \$11.5 billion in 1996. The mission is a project of the Canadian Women's International Business Initiative, set up by the Canadian Embassy in Washington.

The mission program will enable Canadian participants to pursue business opportunities with U.S. firms through mentoring, networking and partnering activities. A series of export development workshops on topics ranging from export strategies to marketing and international business financing will allow participants to improve their understanding of topics that interest them most. On the final day, each businesswoman will follow an individual schedule of meetings, set up by the Embassy, with prospective U.S. clients and partners to explore sales opportunities.

The mission has strong private sector as well as government support. The Royal Bank of Canada is the presenting sponsor. Other sponsors include the Business Development Bank of Canada; the Certified General Accountants' Association of Canada; Export Development Corporation; GM Canada; the law firm of Hodgson,

