



No. 076

April 6, 1989.

## CANADA AND THE U.S. ANNOUNCE FTA AUTO PANEL

International Trade Minister, John C. Crosbie, announced today that in accordance with the Free Trade Agreement, Canada and the U.S. have jointly established a private sector panel of informed persons to advise the two governments on automotive issues. The Minister also released the names of the 15 Canadian members of the 30-member select panel, and was especially pleased that Mr. Darcy McKeough would be its Canadian Co-Chairman.

The panel's mandate, as set out in Article 1004 of the Free Trade Agreement, is to assess the state of the North American automotive industry and to propose public policy measures and private initiatives to improve its competitiveness in domestic and foreign markets. The panel has been asked to complete its work and submit its final report by June 30, 1991.

Canadian members of the panel represent a broad spectrum of interests in the automotive sector, including vehicle manufacturers, labour, parts producers, consumers and dealers. Both federal governments will have observer status.

Mr. Crosbie said that he looked forward to balanced and farsighted advice from the panel given the vital importance of the automotive industry to the economies of both countries. He added that he hoped the panel would concentrate on confronting the realities of a rapidly evolving worldwide industry and would make comprehensive recommendations on improving its international competitiveness.

- 30 -

For further information: Abbie Dann  
Media Relations Office  
Department of External Affairs  
(613) 995-1874