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# news release

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Date **December 31, 1993**

No. 239

For release

## MACLAREN VISITS MEXICO AND CHILE, JANUARY 3-7

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, will visit Mexico and Chile from January 3 to 7. He will discuss with Mexico the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and, with Chile, closer trade ties, including Chile's possible accession to the NAFTA.

In Mexico City between January 3 and 5, Mr. MacLaren will meet his counterpart, Secretary Jaime Serra Puche, President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Foreign Minister Manuel Camacho Solis and Energy Minister Emilio Lozoya Thalmann.

The two trade ministers will discuss ways to further strengthen trade and investment relations between Canada and Mexico and will review work to be undertaken under the NAFTA, including the establishment of the North American Commissions on Environmental and Labour Co-operation.

"Canada looks forward to working with Mexico in a variety of important areas, including the exploration of further trade opportunities," Mr. MacLaren said.

"Canada-Mexico trade and investment have grown significantly in recent years. The partnership between our two countries can make a significant contribution to enhancing the prosperity, competitiveness and political stability of the Hemisphere."

In Santiago on January 6 and 7, Mr. MacLaren will meet Finance Minister Alejandro Foxley to discuss ways to further strengthen the growing trade and investment relations between Canada and Chile. In recent years, Canada has been one of the largest direct foreign investors in Chile. Total Canadian investment now amounts to US\$4 billion.

Mr. MacLaren also noted that Canada had supported the November decision of the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum to invite Chile to join the organization in late 1994. "I also look forward," he said, "to discussing Chile's possible accession

to the NAFTA, during my stay in Santiago. Both of our countries can enhance their economic growth and competitiveness by further liberalizing trade."

While in Santiago, Mr. MacLaren will also meet President-elect Eduardo Frei, whose term of office begins in March.

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