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CANADA HOSTS INTERNATIONAL RUBBER STUDY GROUP

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie and Industry Science and Technology Minister Benoit Bouchard announced today that Canada will host the annual meeting of the International Rubber Study Group (IRSG), September 10-14, in Ottawa. The 250 government and industry members of this London-based group meet annually to discuss market developments and issues related to natural and synthetic rubber.

"Steady growth in the rubber trade, as well as the development of new technologies and processes, demand that Canada keep abreast of new information," Mr. Crosbie said. "Hosting international meetings like the Assembly of the IRSG is an important factor in maintaining Canadian competitiveness."

"The Assembly provides an excellent opportunity for industry and government officials to review recent developments and trends in the natural and synthetic rubber industries," Mr. Bouchard said. "It also provides a forum to discuss technical issues on various aspects of the industry."

In 1989, Canadian synthetic rubber exports represented a value of \$300 million: Canada produced 188,000 tonnes of which 169,000 tonnes were exported primarily to the United States and Japan. At the same time, Canada imported 141,000 tonnes of synthetic rubber and 92,000 tonnes of natural rubber. Canadian domestic consumption and exports have grown steadily since 1984.

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The IRSG was established in 1944. Canada was one of the founding members of the Group and last hosted the Assembly in 1971. The Assembly brings together rubber importing and exporting countries from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America.

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