# News Release

Communiqué

Minister for International Trade



Ministre du Commerce extérieur

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MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE, JOHN C. CROSBIE,
ANNOUNCES COMPOSITION OF THE NEW SECTORAL ADVISORY GROUPS
ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE (SAGITS)

International Trade Minister, John C. Crosbie, announced today the composition of the re-constituted Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITS).

The purpose of the re-constituted SAGITs, and the previously announced International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC), is to provide a two-way flow of information and advice between the government and the Canadian private sector on international trade matters. "The SAGITs will provide the government with indepth sectoral expertise and advice on a wide range of international trade issues" said Mr. Crosbie.

Together, the thirteen SAGITs cover the full spectrum of Canadian economic activities. Some three hundred prominent members of the business, labour, consumer, academic, research and cultural communities have agreed to participate in these advisory committees. "I am delighted that such high calibre people have generously accepted to give their time and expertise to the Government of Canada. Their advice will help the Government define international trade policy and market development priorities" said Mr. Crosbie.

While the mandate of the advisory committees include all trade matters, Minister Crosbie stated that the committees will be called upon mainly to advise on the GATT-sponsored multilateral trade negotiations currently underway and on trade development issues.

Attached is an information sheet on the International Trade Advisory Committee System made up of the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the SAGITs, and the membership lists for the thirteen SAGITs.

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#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

# THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SYSTEM

#### I. MANDATE AND STRUCTURE

The purpose in establishing this permanent advisory committee system is to provide an on-going, confidential, two-way flow of information and advice between the Government and the private sector on international trade matters.

This advisory committee system, which reports to the Minister for International Trade, ensures that the Government has the benefit of private sector views in its deliberations on international trade access and marketing issues, both bilateral and multilateral.

The advisory committee system has two components: The International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) has broad terms of reference on all international trade matters, including issues relating to trade policy, market access and trade development. The other component consists of 13 Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs), which interact with the Government to ensure sectoral views are fully taken into account on international trade matters.

On issues directly related to the Canada-U.S. trade talks or to the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, both components of the advisory committee system work closely with the trade negotiators.

ITAC/SAGITs are the main channel for communicating the views of the Canadian private sector to the Government on these two negotiations. In this regard, private sector submissions on these negotiations are directed to the appropriate SAGIT, and through the Sectoral Advisory Group to the Government.

# II. MEMBERSHIP - APPOINTMENT AND TENURE

Members of both the ITAC and SAGITs must be Canadian citizens and are appointed by the Minister for International Trade. Members will serve for a period of two years, subject to suitable arrangements being made for sensible rotation and the need for continuity.

Members, who serve without remuneration, may be reappointed for one or more additional periods. However, at all times, members serve at the discretion of the Minister for International Trade.

All members are required to sign a security declaration undertaking to respect the confidentiality of classified information provided to them by the Government.

# 1. The International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC)

The membership of this committee is broadly representative and respects regional, sectoral and demographic interests. ITAC comprises approximately 45 members from the business, labour, consumer, cultural, and research and academic communities.

The members of ITAC serve in their individual capacities, not as representatives of specific entities or interest groups.

### 2. Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs)

The thirteen SAGITs are as follows:

- 1. Agriculture, Food and Beverage
- 2. Apparel and Fur
- 3. Arts and Cultural Industries
- 4. Communications, Computer Equipment and Services
- 5. Consumer and Household Products
- 6. Energy, Chemicals and Petrochemicals
- 7. Financial Services
- 8. Fish and Fish Products
- 9. Forest Products
- 10. General Services
- 11. Industrial and Transportation Equipment
- 12. Minerals and Metals
- 13. Textiles, Footwear and Leather

The Minister for International Trade may create additional Sectoral Advisory Groups as required. Membership of each SAGIT will be broadly representative of the specific sector, with the size and composition of each group depending on the individual sector. Therefore, within the advisory committee system, the Sectoral Advisory Groups will be expected to have expertise and knowledge of their respective sectors as well as on trade matters, and will be expected to provide advice concerning those interests.

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