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KUWAIT RECONSTRUCTION MEASURES

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie today announced measures to help Canadian companies take part in the reconstruction of Kuwait now that the Gulf War is over.

Special units have been established in External Affairs and International Trade Canada and in the federal government's Canadian Commercial Corporation (CCC) to help Canadian businesses participate in the reconstruction effort. Mr. Crosbie and the Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, are taking steps to introduce Canadian firms to the Kuwaiti government.

Mr. Crosbie said Canadian firms possess much of the expertise that will be useful in helping the Kuwaitis rebuild their country's infrastructure. "Canadian companies can make a vital contribution to repair the damage inflicted on Kuwait," the Minister said. "Overall, the potential is enormous."

In a recent meeting with Kuwaiti officials, Mr. Crosbie was briefed on the Kuwaiti government's reconstruction plan. Provision of essential services, including water, sanitation, electricity and communications, as well as the oil and gas industry, are Kuwait's priorities. Further opportunities will also exist in the educational and medical sectors and in rebuilding the commercial and housing infrastructure. Mr. Crosbie emphasized that previous experience in the Middle East will be a definite asset in pursuing potential contracts.

Mr. Clark is travelling in the Middle East this week to discuss the situation in the region with a number of the countries concerned. He will take the opportunity of his meetings in Kuwait and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to encourage his counterparts to look favourably upon Canadian participation in reconstruction.

Several other initiatives are also being undertaken by the Department to introduce Canadian companies and capabilities

to Kuwait, including a series of incoming Kuwaiti business missions, outgoing Canadian missions, breakfast seminars, and contacts with active prime contractors to identify potential sub-contractors.

Companies interested in participating in the reconstruction effort are invited to contact:

Task Force on Kuwait Reconstruction (TDT)
External Affairs and International Trade Canada
125 Sussex Drive
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1A 0G2
Telephone: (613) 996-2298
Fax: (613) 996-9265
Contact: Mr. Rick Railer

The Canadian Commercial Corporation will serve as prime contractor in any government-to-government transactions.

"The CCC, with its long-standing experience in contracting with foreign governments, will assign personnel to the Canadian Embassy in Kuwait City to further assist in pursuing commercial opportunities," Mr. Crosbie said.

Canadian businesses wishing to avail themselves of the Corporation's facilities are encouraged to contact:

Kuwait Reconstruction Desk
Canadian Commercial Corporation
50 O'Connor Street
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1A 0S6
Telephone: (613) 996-0034
Fax: (613) 995-2121

For further information, media representatives may contact:

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(613) 995-1874