

# Statement

Minister for  
International  
Trade



# Déclaration

Ministre du  
Commerce  
extérieur

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## NOTES FOR AN ADDRESS

BY THE MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE,

JOHN C. CROSBIE,

AT A DINNER HOSTED BY THE

FINNISH TRADE MINISTER

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

MAY 28, 1990.

Minister Salolainen, Ambassador Vandenhoff, Ladies and Gentlemen.

As a Minister of the Canadian government, it gives me great pleasure to address this distinguished group and to reaffirm the strong bilateral ties that exist between our two countries.

I believe the agreements we signed today on double taxation and air services, will contribute further to the strengthening of our relationship.

As northern parliamentary democracies with similar geography and climate, Canada and Finland have much in common and much experience to share.

Canada and Finland are smaller countries living next to large neighbours who are significant trading partners for us.

I hope to profit by learning Finnish views on the impact of the changes sweeping Western and Eastern Europe, how Finland is adapting to them and seeing if we can identify how we can help each other take advantage of these market developments.

Canadians and Finns work closely together in such organizations as the United Nations, the CSCE, the OECD and the GATT. We have participated together in peacekeeping operations around the world.

Canada and Finland are both Arctic nations and thus share a responsibility for Arctic lands, resources and peoples. Canada was an early, enthusiastic supporter of Finland's call for circumpolar Ministers to gather and consider how best to protect the Arctic environment.

I am pleased to note the stage now appears set for such a meeting here in Finland next spring. You can be assured of continued Canadian support and cooperation in this important initiative.

On the trade side, our exports to each other are growing although the volume involved is relatively small given the complementary strengths of our two economies. It is my hope that our mission will stimulate considerable growth in the commercial relationship.

Finnish companies, however, apparently feel at home in Canada as over 80 of them have made significant investments there, creating employment for over 6000 Canadians.

Among OECD nations, Canada is one of the more dependent on trade.

More than 30% of our GNP results from foreign trade, and 1 of every 3 jobs in Canada depends on it.

We in Canada believe firmly that in an increasingly interdependent world, the best road towards future economic expansion and development lies in greater and more liberalized international trade.

In Geneva last month, I proposed a strategy which would lead to the creation of a world trade organization. I had the opportunity to discuss it further with my counterparts at the informal trade ministers meeting in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

I emphasized, both in Geneva and Puerto Vallarta, that Canada regarded this initiative solely as being dependent on a large and substantive outcome of the MTN negotiations.

The centrepiece of a successful WTO will be an effective dispute settlement system. Such a system would eliminate the problems of delay and blockage of GATT panel decisions by adopting a system of panel review and appeal procedures, building upon the experience of the Canada/United States Free Trade Agreement.

Last month, Minister Salolainen and I also had the opportunity to address the extraordinarily successful Bonn meeting on Economic Cooperation in Europe. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of that conference was the change from the confrontation of the past to the creation of a common cause for the future.

This progressive convergence among CSCE nations throws open the door to a new Europe. Canada, long a partner in Europe, long a partner in the CSCE, is fully committed to what I believe will be Europe's second renaissance.

Canada recognizes as well the important role of the member countries of EFTA in assisting economies in transition and in the EFTA/EC efforts to liberalize their trading relationship through the formation of a European Economic Space.

I know that Finland is playing a leading role in these latter discussions and wish you every success in this important trade initiative.

I would stress that without the essential involvement of the private sector, government efforts lack a critical dimension. The Canadian government will continue to work in close partnership with Canadian business people so that the global challenges before us can be met. That is why prominent Canadian business leaders are accompanying me in Finland.

In my talks with the Canadian business community, I have stressed the concept of partner Europe. To the Confederation of Finnish Industries, I suggested partner Canada as a way to deal with competition in Europe and in North America.

Such mutual association will enable our companies to take greater advantage of the FTA, Europe 1992 and other market developments. I believe that the relative size of our respective corporations makes them eminently suitable for cooperation with each other and encourage them to explore such possibilities to the fullest.

In that regard, I would certainly welcome a visit to Canada by Minister Salolainen and an accompanying Finnish Trade Delegation as follow-up to this mission.

We are also looking forward to the visit to Canada of President Koivisto later this year. This will add additional momentum to our overall bilateral relationship and ensure Canada and Finland continue to cooperate closely on a range of issues.

In closing, I wish to say how much I have enjoyed my visit to Finland and the warmth with which I have been received. My wife and I will take many fond memories away with us and will look forward to returning one day to see more of your beautiful country.

Thank you.