

Minister of Industry,
Science and Technology and
Minister for International Trade



Ministre de l'Industrie, des
Sciences et de la Technologie et
ministre du Commerce extérieur

News Release

Communiqué

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MINISTER WELCOMES SAUDI AMBASSADOR AND DELEGATES TO CANADA/SAUDI ARABIA JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION OCTOBER 1-3

Minister of Industry, Science and Technology and Minister for International Trade, the Honourable Michael H. Wilson, today announced that the Canada/Saudi Arabia Joint Economic Commission (JEC) will hold its sixth plenary meeting in Ottawa, October 1-3.

"I welcome His Excellency Mohamed Ma'Mou Kurdi, as Head of the Saudi Delegation, and all delegates -- including Canadian and Saudi members of the Business Advisory Group -- with whom I will be meeting," Mr. Wilson said. "Canada's role in the Gulf crisis brought closer to home and reinforced our relations with Saudi Arabia and other countries in the region. In a current context, I believe it is important to note that this Commission has worked successfully over the past six years in promoting closer ties between Canada and Saudi Arabia."

Canada and Saudi Arabia established the JEC in 1976. The Commission seeks to encourage and facilitate economic and technical co-operation between Canada and Saudi Arabia in mutually agreed sectors. The Commission encourages Canadian companies to seek out Saudi partners in responding to business opportunities in Saudi Arabia. It also serves to promote greater awareness of Canadian technology, goods and services in Saudi Arabia.

Representatives of the private sector and officials from the Canadian and Saudi governments meet at least once every 18 months under the auspices of the JEC. The Commission last met at Riyadh in February 1989.

The Minister added, "Over the next two days, our discussions will focus on recent developments in trade relations between Canada and Saudi Arabia. Committees will focus on matters of mutual interest in telecommunications, mining, mapping, surveying, remote sensing, transportation, education, training and health care services." (Attached is a list of Canadian and Saudi members of the Business Advisory Group who will meet with the Minister.)

Traditionally, Saudi Arabia has been one of Canada's most dynamic trading partners in the Middle East. Bilateral trade between Canada and Saudi Arabia totalled more than \$1.1 billion in 1990. Canada exported goods worth \$273 million last year. Main exports were barley, paper, lumber, telecommunications products and electrical components. Canada also supplied services estimated at more than \$200 million. In the same year, imports -- mostly crude oil -- were the highest since 1982, up some 250 per cent at \$634 million.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

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SIXTH PLENARY OF CANADA/SAUDI ARABIA
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2 AND THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1991

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