

News Release

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MACLAREN AND KINKEL FORM WORKING GROUP ON TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, met today in Bonn with Dr. Klaus Kinkel, German Minister of Foreign Affairs, to discuss ways to foster and strengthen transatlantic as well as bilateral trade and investment relations.

As they had done on several previous occasions, Mr. MacLaren and Dr. Kinkel reiterated their support for the creation of a transatlantic free trade zone. This idea is also supported by an increasing number of European countries, including Great Britain and the Scandinavian countries.

The ministers agreed to set up a joint German-Canadian working group, effective immediately. The task of the working group is to develop a plan of action to expand and to deepen the transatlantic partnership, especially in the area of trade and economic relations. The ministers decided that the working group should achieve results before the end of 1995 and that these should be submitted to European Union institutions.

"Canada has an important role to play in the transatlantic dialogue and should be fully integrated in it," Dr. Kinkel said. Both ministers emphasized the need to revitalize transatlantic relations. "This must be reflected not only in government-to-government relations but also in relations between our respective Parliaments and private sector organizations," Mr. MacLaren added.

Welcoming the recent 10 per cent increase in bilateral trade, Dr. Kinkel praised Canadian commitments in the new German Federal States. Canada has invested in about 40 projects in the former East Germany. Mr. MacLaren emphasized that Canada's special interest in economic relations with Germany was demonstrated by the recent opening of a consulate in Hamburg. He expressed satisfaction on his meetings with leading representatives of



business and industry during his visit to Germany. He welcomed the agreement between the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI) and the Bundesverband der Deutschen Industrie (BDI) to foster direct business-to-business linkages and to explore ways to enhance transatlantic trade and investment.

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