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COCOM CONTROLS ON EXPORTS TO CHINA

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, announced today that Canada had joined with its NATO Allies and Japan in relaxing export controls on certain strategic goods to the People's Republic of China. These controls, based on the Export and Import Permits Act, are aimed at civilian strategic equipment and other high technology goods described in the Export Control List. Exports of high technology products to China require Canadian as well as approval of the Paris based Coordinating Committee (COCOM), whose mandate is to coordinate the export control programs of its members as they relate to strategic and military goods.

Since 1979, COCOM has followed a policy of increasing its favourable consideration of requests for exports of strategic goods to China. Recently there has been a dramatic increase in China permit applications. COCOM Members have agreed to accelerate the approval process and to shorten delays in obtaining export permits.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs noted that many of the priority areas in China's development strategy coincide with strong capabilities in Canadian industry, particularly in such fields as agriculture, forestry, hydro, natural resources development, and telecommunications.

This initiative to ease export controls to China complements the renewal of the Trade Agreement between Canada and China announced on July 16, 1985 by the Honourable James Kelleher, Minister of International Trade.

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Following consultations with the Chinese authorities in Beijing last December, Canada now approves exports of certain types of machine tools, semi-conductors, test equipment, lasers, computers, telephone exchanges, totalling more than twenty categories of strategic goods without the prior unanimous approval of COCOM.

Details of the new procedures and technical specifications for those categories of products exempt from COCOM review are contained in a Notice to Exporters issued today by the Export Controls Division of the Department of External Affairs.