

News Release

Communiqué

Minister for
International
Trade



Ministre du
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extérieur

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GOVERNMENT INVITES PUBLIC COMMENTS ON
CANADA'S MARKET ACCESS OBJECTIVES
IN GATT URUGUAY ROUND BY JUNE 30, 1989

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie today announced that the government is calling for written submissions from Canadian producers, exporters and other interested parties outlining their specific interests in the market access negotiations in the context of the Uruguay Round. The negotiations, which are being held under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), were launched in September, 1986, and are now entering their substantive and detailed phase with a view to their completion by the end of 1990.

In calling for the views of Canadian producers and other interested parties, Mr. Crosbie stated, "Canada has a major stake in these negotiations. Following our successful conclusion of the Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement, the GATT negotiations offer the promise to further open up our export markets overseas, providing for a more competitive Canadian marketplace. Canada, as a major world trader, needs to exploit fully the potential gains to be made in the Uruguay Round."

Mr. Crosbie, who was the host of a meeting of GATT Trade Ministers in Montreal in December 1988, recalled that in the area of market access for manufacturing, resource based products and agriculture, the negotiating frameworks call for substantial reductions of both tariffs and non-tariff barriers world wide so as to further expand international trade.

The purpose of calling for written views of Canadian producers and exporters is to give the government as clear a picture as possible of the specific trade interests which can be promoted in the negotiations. This will supplement the ongoing consultations with the private sector through the International Trade Advisory Committee and the Sectoral Advisory Groups. The Government wants to ensure that all relevant information is taken into account in formulating Canadian positions. Mr. Crosbie stated, "We want all interested Canadians, enterprise, labour and other groups to have the opportunity to give the government the benefit of their experience and interest in international trade. We want Canadians to help us to identify which markets of the 1990's we should be targetting."

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Canada

Parties interested in submitting their views to the government should do so before June 30, 1989. Submissions should be made to: OFFICE FOR MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, C-3 LESTER B. PEARSON BUILDING, 125 SUSSEX DRIVE, OTTAWA, ONTARIO, K1A 0G2 (FACSIMILE 613 996-9103). Submissions will be reviewed by an interdepartmental committee which includes representatives from all Departments concerned, including Finance, Industry, Science and Technology, Fisheries and Oceans, Energy, Mines and Resources, and Agriculture.

Details on submissions are contained in the attached Annex.

For further information, media should contact:

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A N N E X

The Uruguay Round is about to enter its substantive phase and Canada, as an active participant, will be negotiating with all countries under the auspices of the GATT to reduce import barriers to their markets for Canadian goods and services. As part of the negotiations, countries will be negotiating reductions in tariff and non-tariff barriers on goods which are currently in effect. Canadian companies or producers who export or import or have an interest in doing so have a direct stake in the outcome of the GATT negotiations. In order that the government is better able to serve these interests, views are being invited from the public on this important matter.

In addition, advice is being sought from the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs). These groups, which have been reconstituted since the conclusion of the FTA to provide advice on the GATT negotiations and other trade issues, are working towards a mid-summer deadline to provide detailed views of the private sector on specific market access issues related to trade in goods. The federal government is also consulting closely with the provincial governments and the territories. Interested parties which have already communicated their views to these bodies or the provinces or territories do not need to make a separate submission to the government unless they so desire.

Submissions should be as specific as possible concerning the products (including the classification number under the Harmonized System where available) and countries of export interest and should identify, where relevant, the current barriers (tariffs, non-tariff barriers) which impede access to Canadian exports of either manufactured and resource based products as well as agriculture and food products. Examples of non-tariff barriers which are being negotiated in the Uruguay Round are quantitative limits or import quotas, import licensing arrangements, discriminatory government purchasing practices and other government measures which restrict or prohibit trade. It should be noted that in light of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, Canada's access to the U.S. market has been largely addressed. However certain measures such as government purchasing practices are also covered by the GATT negotiations and representations on these or other measures would be welcomed.

Petitioners may also wish to provide comments on the desirability of reducing or eliminating specific Canadian rates of duty applied under the Customs Tariff or other measures which serve to protect Canadian production of goods. Such comments should outline the probable effect of such reductions in terms which are as specific as possible.

Information concerning the petitioner would also be helpful, including current production and export figures of the products concerned, employment, and other relevant information.

The submission should indicate if any information is confidential.

For further information contact:

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