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**INTERNATIONAL TRADE MINISTER**  
**MICHAEL H. WILSON**  
**APPOINTS CHIEF NEGOTIATOR FOR TRILATERAL TALKS**

International Trade Minister Michael H. Wilson today is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. John M. Weekes as Chief Negotiator for the North America Free Trade Negotiations involving Canada, Mexico and the United States. Mr. Weekes has been Canadian Ambassador to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in Geneva, Switzerland, since 1987, and as such has been actively involved in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations. Mr. Wilson said, "We have selected Mr. Weekes for this task because it was clear that Canada should be represented by an experienced senior negotiator in these important talks, which are scheduled to begin formally in the next few months."

Mr. Weekes will be supported by a special office for negotiations within External Affairs and International Trade Canada and by a team of expert negotiators for specific issues drawn from various government departments.

Mr. Wilson further noted that there would be very close co-operation between the teams dealing with the Multilateral Trade Negotiations and the North America Free Trade Negotiations. "We have two important negotiations running in parallel, often dealing with the same issues. We will ensure that the Canadian position in both talks is consistent and co-ordinated," Mr. Wilson emphasized.

Mr. Wilson said that Mr. Weekes would be expected to work closely with the provinces in developing the Canadian approach to the talks. The Government intends to work just as closely with the provinces as it has done in the FTA

negotiations with the United States and as it is now doing in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

Mr. Wilson also said that Mr. Weekes and his team would be working closely with the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGIT), which include representatives of business, labour and academia, and with other interested partners in the private sector in developing the Canadian position. "We have already received excellent co-operation from the private sector in the exploratory phase of these negotiations. I call on all those interested to work closely with Mr. Weekes to ensure the best possible results for Canada," the Minister said.

Mr. Weekes' curriculum vitae is attached.

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For further information, media representatives may contact:

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## JOHN M. WEEKES

### Ambassador of Canada to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)

Mr. Weekes was born in Toronto, Canada, on July 22, 1943. He received a B.A. (Honours) in Political Science and Economics from the University of Toronto in 1966 and joined External Affairs Canada the same year. He served in the Canadian Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, from 1968 to 1971 with concurrent accreditation in Romania and Bulgaria. He served in the Commercial Policy Division from 1971 to 1973; from 1973 to 1979 he was Counsellor, Delegation to the Multilateral Trade Negotiations in Geneva; in 1974 he was also Advisor to the Canadian Delegation to the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE). In Ottawa he served as a Divisional Director in the trade policy field from 1979 to 1983 when he became Director General of Trade Policy.

Mr. Weekes assumed his responsibilities as Ambassador to the GATT in September 1987. He was elected as Chairman of the GATT Council for the year 1988-89 and as Chairman of the GATT Contracting Parties for 1989-90. He was also Chairman of the Uruguay Round Negotiating Group dealing with GATT Articles.

Mr. Weekes has been active as a volunteer in the field of alpine skiing in the Ottawa area. He occupied several positions and in 1986-87 served as Chairman of the Alpine Committee of the National Capital Division of the Canadian Ski Association.

Mr. Weekes is married to Arlene Weekes (Harris) and has two children.