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INTERNATIONAL TRADE MINISTER PARTICIPATES IN
QUADRILATERAL TRADE MEETING IN
THE NETHERLANDS

The Hague -- International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie participated in a meeting of Quadrilateral Trade Ministers (Canada, the European Community, Japan and the United States) in The Hague, The Netherlands from June 2-4, 1989. This meeting was hosted by Frans Andriessen, Vice-President and Commissioner and External Relations, European Commission, and attended by Ambassador Carla Hills, United States Trade Representative, and M.I.T.I. Vice-Minister Muraoka of Japan as well as Minister Crosbie. The meeting offered an excellent opportunity for productive discussion of the main issues currently confronting the international trade system and the state of play in the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

The meeting took place directly after the OECD Ministerial in Paris which had addressed a number of disturbing developments in the trading system, including the use by the United States of Section 301 of the U.S. Trade and Competitiveness Act. Mr. Crosbie said The Hague meeting was useful in allowing for a frank exchange on these developments. "Quadrilateral group countries have a special responsibility for the multilateral trading system". He said: "And everything we do should be directed to strengthening, and not undermining, the GATT. We must avoid unilateral measures or any other action inconsistent with GATT members' obligations", he emphasized. The Minister put particular stress on the need for Quad countries to respect the GATT Dispute Settlement System. "If we are not prepared to adopt and implement GATT panel rulings", he stressed, "we will discredit the system".

.../2

Ministers had a particularly fruitful discussion about the Uruguay Round. There was a strong commitment from all participants to press forward vigorously with the current negotiations which all agreed must end on schedule by the end of 1990. Ministers reviewed the range of issues under negotiation and confirmed their intention to put forward specific negotiating proposals in all areas in the next few months. In this general review Mr. Crosbie stressed Canadian interests in Agriculture, Subsidies and Countervail and Market Access negotiations, which will now be moving into their substantive phase.

The Quadrilateral Ministers had a detailed discussion of Investment, Intellectual Property and Services. In introducing the Services issue Minister Crosbie stated: "This is a critical issue for the Round. Services constitute an extremely important sector in our economies and a growing element in international trade. I think it's essential that we establish good clear rules which will allow Canada to build on our experience in liberalization of trade in Services as developed in the Free Trade Agreement".