



news release

Date October 26, 1989.

No. 260

For release

CANADA PROPOSES INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY STANDARDS TO REDUCE TRADE PROBLEMS

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie and Acting Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs Harvie Andre announced today that a Canadian paper on intellectual property standards and international trade will be tabled in Geneva, Switzerland on October 30, 1989 as part of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The Canadian paper is on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPs) and addresses the need for adequate international intellectual property standards, in order to reduce trade problems which have emerged in recent years.

"Canada is proposing that a TRIPs agreement should provide for enhanced effective levels of protection of intellectual property rights, remove discriminatory practices in other countries, and ensure that Canada retains access to world-level technology," Mr. Crosbie said.

Effective protection for inventors, owners of intellectual property and users serves to encourage innovation and improve competitiveness. It provides a secure environment to facilitate international trade in goods and services. It creates employment and spin-off benefits in the high technology, manufacturing and service industries. By contrast, inadequate protection can result in lower levels of creativity and research and development, and reduce the range of new, leading-edge technologies, products and services available to Canada and in the international market.

Mr. Andre said, "Canada's proposals are in line with the Government's increasing emphasis on the need to promote the development and use of science and technology by Canadians. They also complement the work being done in Canada to modernize the

...2

domestic intellectual property framework, and are consistent with the direction of Canada's intellectual property policies which encompass effective protection of owners' rights, appropriately balanced with reasonable access for users."

This standards submission follows Canada's September 1989 proposals on the enforcement of intellectual property rights, which provide the basis for effective and non-discriminatory international enforcement rules. In Canada's view, such a multilateral system of rules would replace unilateral action by individual countries. Canada supports wide participation in a Multilateral Trade Negotiations agreement on trade-related intellectual property.

The two sets of proposals were developed in consultation with representatives of the Canadian private sector and reflect their concerns about the protection of owners' rights, users' rights, trade distortions and the use of discriminatory and unilateral trade instruments.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) is the cornerstone of the world trade system and of Canada's international trade policy. The Uruguay Round is the eighth major round of multilateral trade negotiations and it is expected to conclude in December 1990. One of Canada's objectives under the Uruguay Round is to develop trade rules for subjects not previously covered under GATT, including trade-related intellectual property matters, in order to strengthen the ability of the multilateral trading system to deal with the emerging trade policy issues of the 1990s.

For further information, please contact:

D.P. Lee

External Affairs and International Trade Canada

(613) 992-6700