

News Release

Communiqué

Minister for
International
Trade



Ministre du
Commerce
extérieur

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FIRST MEETING OF THE CANADA-UNITED STATES
TRADE COMMISSION

International Trade Minister, John C. Crosbie, will meet U.S. Trade Representative, Carla Hills, in Washington on Monday for the inaugural meeting of the Canada-United States Trade Commission.

The Commission was established under the terms of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to ensure effective implementation of the FTA by both countries. In particular, it will meet at least twice a year to:

- supervise implementation of the FTA;
- resolve any disputes over its interpretation;
- oversee further elaboration of the FTA; and
- consider any matters which could affect FTA implementation.

Mr. Crosbie and his U.S. counterpart are expected to cover a number of administrative and technical issues related to operating procedures, the establishment of working groups, a system for delegating authority, as well as other bilateral trade issues.

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CANADA-U.S. TRADE COMMISSION

Background

- The Commission consists of meetings between the Minister for International Trade and the United States Trade Representative for the purpose of ensuring that the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is being effectively implemented by both countries.

- The Commission will meet at least twice a year to:
 - supervise the implementation of the FTA;
 - resolve any disputes over its interpretation;
 - oversee further elaboration of the FTA; and
 - consider any matters which could affect FTA implementation.

- Between sittings of the Commission, the U.S. Branch of the Department of External Affairs and the office of the United States Trade Representative will deal with bilateral trade issues. The Binational Secretariat, established under Chapter 19 of the FTA, will provide technical support to panels established by the Commission.

- The Commission will play a pivotal role in the resolution of trade disputes under the FTA since it will develop the rosters from which panel members are chosen and it is empowered to receive and approve trade dispute panel recommendations.