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MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE TO LAUNCH THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, accompanied by the Honourable Pat Carney, Minister for International Trade and the Honourable Tom Hockin, Minister of State for Finance, will lead Canada's Delegation to the September 15-19 Conference in Punta del Este, Uruguay, to launch a new round of multilateral trade negotiations (MTN). The Conference is expected to be attended by Ministerial representatives from all of Canada's major trading partners in the GATT.

Also attending the Conference will be three Members of Parliament: the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Mr. Steven Langdon and Mrs. Barbara Sparrow. Ministers will be supported by an interdepartmental group of federal officials headed by the Ambassador for Multilateral Trade Negotiations, Sylvia Ostry.

In keeping with the spirit of cooperation in the area of Canada's participation in trade negotiations, representatives of provincial governments have been invited to accompany Minister Clark and his delegation. Those attending will be: the Honourable Roland Thornhill of Nova Scotia, the Honourable Pierre MacDonald of Quebec, the Honourable Murray Elston of Ontario and the Honourable James Horsman of Alberta.

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This is the eighth MTN round to be held under GATT auspices since the General Agreement came into force in 1948, but it is, by far, the most comprehensive and complex of any yet undertaken. "Canada attaches utmost importance to a successful outcome from this important Conference in Punta del Este", said Minister Clark. "These negotiations come at a most opportune time for a joint effort to fight back protectionism, to work to keep world trading channels open and to seek long term solutions to the current disruption in world agricultural trade. They will also be essential to efforts to restore discipline, to strengthen the international trading system and to provide the framework for a new and positive environment for trade relations into the 21st century".

Minister Carney noted that these negotiations are very important for Canada. "All of our major trading partners will be at the table", she said, "and we will have an opportunity to negotiate the improved and more secure market access so important to our producers of agricultural, fisheries, resource-based and other products and to our suppliers of internationally-competitive service".

A number of private sector representatives are expected to accept the Honourable Pat Carney's invitation to accompany the Canadian delegation to Punta del Este. These include Walter Light of Northern Telecom Ltd., who is also Chairman of the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC), and Wendy Dobson of the C.D. Howe Institute, Jean-Paul Gourdeau of Le Groupe SNC, Bill Morrow of National Sea Products Ltd. and Ted Turner of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.