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INTERNATIONAL TRADE MINISTER CROSBIE TO PORTUGAL TO PROMOTE TRADE AND DEFEND CANADA'S FISH INTERESTS

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie will visit Portugal March 20-25 to promote bilateral relations and to press for an end to overfishing in waters beyond Canada's 200-mile limit.

His visit, the first ever by a Canadian international trade minister to Portugal, signals Canada's desire to consolidate and expand bilateral trade and investment relations and to secure European Community (EC) adherence to conservation decisions set by the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO).

During his visit to Portugal, Mr. Crosbie will explore bilateral trade and investment possibilities as well as joint venture and third country market opportunities.

"Portugal's buoyant economy, the fastest growing in the EC, offers real opportunity for Canadian companies to establish a foothold in the unified market," said Mr. Crosbie. "The availability of EC funds to develop Portugal makes it attractive to potential Canadian partners." The Minister added that Portugal is also an important market for Canadian fish exports.

Mr. Crosbie is scheduled to meet with his counterpart, the Minister of Commerce and Tourism, and the Ministers of Industry and Energy, and Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, as well as senior government officials. In his meetings the Minister will make the point that overfishing must be brought under control.

"It is vital to the conservation of northwest Atlantic fish stocks that the European Community and its member states bring their fishing practices into full accord with the conservation decisions of the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization," said Mr. Crosbie. "Quota reductions must translate into real catch reductions. The need for effective enforcement, based on timely improvements in NAFO's surveillance and control system, will be an important message during my fisheries discussions in Portugal."

The delegation accompanying the Minister includes representatives of Atlantic Canada's fishing industry, and Canadian business people who will meet representatives of Portuguese business and industrial associations.

Mr. Crosbie will visit Lisbon and Porto.

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