



# communiqué

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## TRADE MINISTER RELEASES TRADING HOUSE TASK FORCE REPORT

The Honourable James Kelleher, Minister for International Trade, released today, the Report of the Trading House Task Force, titled "Promoting Canadian Exports: The Trading House Option".

The Minister said "The mandate of the Task Force, which was chaired by Mr. T.M. Burns, former President of the Canadian Export Association, was to assess the importance of the trading house sector in Canada, identify its problems and opportunities and propose measures which would assist the sector in making its maximum contribution to the expansion of Canadian exports, particularly with regard to manufactured products". Trading houses were defined in the Report as being those companies specialized in the exporting, importing and third country trading in goods and services produced or provided by other parties, and which provide related services to these activities.

The Minister noted the report's findings that trading houses play a significant role in Canada's export performance, accounting for over 13% of total Canadian exports in 1983. More significantly, they account for 40% of all Canadian exports to non-U.S. markets making them an important vehicle for Canadian products to reach overseas markets.

The Minister was impressed with the potential for introducing small to medium-sized companies to the export market through the trading house sector. However, he

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cautioned that in order to realize this potential, collective initiatives will have to be undertaken by both government and the private sector in addressing the report's 32 recommendations. In this regard, he was encouraged by the early initiative demonstrated by the private sector in the formation of a new Council of Canadian Export Trading Houses under the auspices of the Canadian Export Association: to provide an accreditation procedure for trading houses; represent their interests at the federal level; and promote the services of the sector to manufacturers and producers. "There is no doubt" said Minister Kelleher "that the formation of the new Council would certainly improve the awareness of trading house capabilities in Canada. It will also assist in overcoming the lingering view that the use of trading houses is a second best approach for selling internationally."

In response to the recommendations the Minister also announced the establishment of a Trading House and Countertrade Division in External Affairs whose first major task will be to coordinate the government's response to the recommendations. These will be presented in a Trading House conference to be held in Ottawa in late spring.

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