

News Release

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MACLAREN LEADS CANADIAN TRADE AND INVESTMENT MISSION TO POLAND

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, visited Poland today for discussions with Polish ministers and business representatives. He was accompanied by a large Canadian business delegation pursuing trade and investment opportunities.

Mr. MacLaren was hosted by Minister for Foreign Economic Relations Jacek Buchacz. He met with Prime Minister Josef Oleksy, Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Grzegorz Kolodko, Minister of Construction and Land Barbara Blida, and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Mroziewicz.

"I was impressed with Poland's accomplishments in its economic transition towards a market economy. I am confident that further trade and economic liberalization will take place in Poland, creating new opportunities for Canadian and Polish businesspeople," Mr. MacLaren said.

As Minister responsible for the Export Development Corporation (EDC), Mr. MacLaren witnessed the signature of three important EDC agreements:

- a Memorandum of Understanding with Bank Handlowy to make available a \$20-million line of credit to help finance Canadian exports to Poland, the first such facility extended by EDC to Poland in 16 years;
- a Co-operative Framework Agreement with KUKE, Poland's export credit agency, providing a framework whereby EDC and KUKE will seek to increase co-operation in the financing and insuring of Canadian and Polish participation in projects in third countries;
- a Protocol with International UNP Holdings Limited of Canada outlining the intent of EDC and UNP to invest jointly in Poland.



On behalf of Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs André Ouellet, Mr. MacLaren signed with Mr. Kolodko a Memorandum of Understanding setting up the Canada-Poland Entrepreneurs Fund (CPEF).

The CPEF is a seven-year, \$32-million fund, financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and designed to provide financial and technical support to Poland's rapidly growing small and medium-sized enterprises. It will support firms through loans, equity investments and advice, and it will be administered by a Polish foundation in partnership with a Polish bank. It is to begin operations on January 1, 1996. The CPEF will be the cornerstone of the Canadian Technical Co-operation Program in Poland.

Mr. MacLaren also announced two additional technical assistance projects in Poland:

- Canada will contribute about \$600,000 to a project managed by the Canadian Centre for Remote Sensing (CCRS). CCRS will assist the Polish Centre for Remote Sensing in developing a system that, among other things, will predict crop production for the Polish Ministry of Agriculture.
- The International Aviation Management Training Institute will provide advice and training to the Polish aviation industry in developing and implementing new policies and standards, and in streamlining operations. Canada will contribute about \$1 million to this project. Polish participants include the Polish Civil Aviation Authority, Polish State Airports, and Lot Airlines.

Poland is Canada's largest market in Central Europe. In 1994, two-way trade reached \$160 million. With the recent increase in the number of Canadian investors to Poland, Canada now ranks as the sixth-largest foreign investor in terms of number of investors and eleventh in terms of cumulative value (\$140 million) of Canadian investment. With a population of 40 million, growing income levels and a rapidly expanding private sector, Poland offers numerous trade and investment opportunities in areas of Canadian expertise.

- 30 -

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