

News Release

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE MINISTER TO SPEAK AT CONFERENCE
ON EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND ATTEND
MTN MEETINGS

International Trade Minister John C. Crosbie announced today that he will be attending multilateral economic and trade meetings in Europe and Mexico. At the Economic Cooperation Conference in Bonn April 9-11, the Minister will participate in efforts to achieve greater economic cooperation and trade liberalization in Europe. In Geneva and Mexico, Mr. Crosbie will attend meetings with a view to ensuring the success of the current round of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) aimed at achieving greater liberalization of the international trading system.

The Economic Cooperation Conference, which has been in progress since March 19, is part of an ongoing process referred to as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The CSCE groups together all European countries (except Albania) and Canada and the United States. The Bonn Conference marks the first time the 35 member States of the CSCE have focused on trade and economic issues. Canadian officials and private sector representatives have been participating in the Conference since the beginning. Mr. Crosbie will address the Conference at the closing plenary April 10.

"Canada is a partner in Europe, and has been for decades. We intend to make a full and active contribution to the evolution of Europe," Mr. Crosbie said. "I view the Conference as a unique opportunity for the private sector and governments to discuss together policies and programs which can contribute to economic growth."

"Through our participation in the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, through sponsorship of trade missions, through management training programs and in many other ways, the Canadian government and Canadians themselves are helping to create more economic cooperation. This will be to the benefit of the partners on both sides of the Atlantic."

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In Bonn, Minister Crosbie will be accompanied by four prominent Canadian chief executive officers (CEOs) and several Canadian parliamentarians.

"It is vital that the private sector be a part of this consultation process," Mr. Crosbie said. "They are the ones who will, to a large extent, bring about the jobs and economic growth that people want. With government programs to support and complement their efforts, we will secure the increased economic, commercial and industrial cooperation necessary for the economic transformation of Europe."

In Bonn, Mr. Crosbie will also meet with his German counterpart and host of the CSCE meeting, Helmut Haussman, Minister of Economics.

Following his attendance at the Bonn Conference, Mr. Crosbie will visit Geneva, April 11-12. His visit will coincide with the senior officials meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC), part of the MTN process of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

"As it follows closely my visit to the CSCE, my time in Geneva will give me the opportunity to discuss issues arising from the integration of all of the economies of Europe into the international trading system," Mr. Crosbie said. "Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Romania are already members of the GATT, and Canada supports the application of the USSR to be an observer. I look forward to the day when all the countries of Europe will be full members of the GATT."

In Geneva, Mr. Crosbie will meet with the Director General of the GATT, Arthur Dunkel, and several Ambassadors to the GATT, including a group representing Latin American countries. He will also meet with Ambassadors representing participating countries of the newly-founded Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group. Mr. Crosbie will discuss with them the APEC trade and economic ministers meeting he will host in Vancouver in September, 1990.

Meetings in Geneva will also prepare the Minister for the Informal Trade Ministers Meeting in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, April 19-20, attended by trade and economic ministers from 28 other countries. This will be the first of a series of multilateral ministerial meetings that will focus on the management of the Uruguay Round of the MTN leading to the concluding conference in December.

"In Geneva and Mexico, I intend to emphasize that the Uruguay Round is at a critical stage with only eight months left for the negotiations. The meetings in Mexico will allow ministers to review in detail the progress and prospects for the Round and I will take the opportunity to reiterate Canada's commitment to a successful conclusion," Mr. Crosbie said. "Particularly in light of the changes in Europe, I regard it as a priority that these negotiations lead to a strengthened institutional framework for the multilateral trading system," Mr. Crosbie added.

Mr. Crosbie will also lead a trade and investment mission of senior representatives of Canada's business community to Mexico.

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