



news release

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MACLAREN REPORTS ON HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL TRADE MISSION TO SOUTH AFRICA

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, today reported on the success of his trade mission to South Africa during a keynote address to a South Africa Business Forum organized by the Canadian Exporters' Association in Toronto.

While in South Africa, the Minister met with senior government and African National Congress officials, including state president F.W. de Klerk and prominent members of the South African business community.

Mr. MacLaren's January 30 to February 4 mission marked the first visit by a Canadian trade minister to South Africa in 30 years. He was accompanied by senior representatives from Canadian companies and banks, as well as the President of the Black Business Professional Association in Canada.

"More than ever we are enthusiastic about the prospects in South Africa," the Minister said. "We return with an order book much larger than anticipated and a conviction that the future offers new markets for Canadian goods and services," he added.

Mr. MacLaren highlighted the return to trade normalization between Canada and South Africa by officially opening a new Canadian Trade Office in Johannesburg. He also announced several significant business opportunities that came about during the mission (see attached).

"These initiatives should encourage other Canadian exporters to seriously consider the South African market, as well as the larger market of the sub-Saharan region," the Minister said.

In demonstration of the new "Team Canada" approach to international trade promotion, Mr. MacLaren was also accompanied during the mission by Ontario minister without portfolio, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, Richard Allen.

- 30 -

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BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

- Signing by the Export Development Corporation (EDC) of a US\$60-million line of credit with South Africa's Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), to support Canadian suppliers of the aluminum smelting project ALUSAF, managed by SNC Lavalin.
- Signing by the EDC of further lines of credit totalling US\$40 million with four major South African banks (Standard Bank, First National Bank, Nedbank and the ABBSA banking group) to support increased procurement of Canadian goods and services.
- Announcement by Newbridge Microsystems, a division of Newbridge Electronics, of a joint-venture agreement with a well-established South African electronics group, Centera, for the worldwide development and marketing of new product lines.
- Signing by SR Telecom Inc. of St-Laurent, Quebec, of a major contract with Telkom SA for the supply and installation of six major systems of SR500 rural subscriber systems. These systems will initially be used to relay the April election results from 300 polling stations situated throughout the Transvaal region. After the elections, these systems will be used to provide, for the first time, regular telephone and data services to the same 300 communities.

The value of the contract is estimated at \$8.5 million. In support of this contract, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), through its Industrial Co-operation Program, will provide the funding for the training component of the project. SR Telecom also intends to use South Africa as a base for selling its products to sub-Saharan Africa.

- Signing by Western Star Trucks of Kelowna, British Columbia, of an agreement for the supply of 12 vehicles valued at US\$1.25 million to a major South African transport company with significant transborder traffic with neighbouring Zambia.
- Continuation of talks between Bombardier Regional Aircraft Division and its South African client regarding other business opportunities. Bombardier has recently announced the sale to South Africa of 12 DASH-8 aircraft built by de Havilland.
- Other members of the mission, including Agra Industries, Spar Aerospace and CAE Electronics, had substantive discussions with potential South African partners, which could lead to long-term business relations.