



The Canada Europe Round Table for Business (CERT) High-Level Meeting with Canadian Trade Minister and European Trade Commission on Canada-EU Trade & Investment Enhancement Agreement

TORONTO, MARCH 18, 2004 – CERT company senior executives met with Canadian Minister of International Trade James S. Peterson and European Union (EU) Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy yesterday evening at The National Club to discuss the negotiating framework for the Canada-EU Trade and Investment Enhancement Agreement (TIEA).

The working dinner focused on CERT policy recommendations that have been submitted to the federal government and the European Commission for the TIEA. The goal of these recommendations is to facilitate investment between these territories, which has grown rapidly in the last decade.

Minister Peterson told the 20 senior business executives gathered for the dinner, *“CERT’s ongoing advice is critical as we (Canada) proceed to developing enhanced relations with the European Union.”*

Issues addressed at the working dinner included how to better integrate transatlantic capital markets, establish more predictable rules for merger and acquisitions, prevent the rise of non-tariff barriers to trade and investment flows, and the design of complimentary regulatory cooperation framework between Canada and the EU. The CERT delegation was led by Cal Goldman of Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP, a former Commissioner of the Canadian Competition Bureau and Chair of the ICC’s Task Force on Competition and Trade.

Commissioner Lamy highlighted that *“the real obstacle to trade and investment (between Canada and the EU) are differences in regulation. This is a message that started with CERT.”*

Lamy told the business executives that *“with its focus on regulatory cooperation, the TIEA is a forward-looking, 21st Century Agreement.”* He went on to add, *“CERT is a driving force in what we try to do between Canada and Europe.”* *CERT’s indications on priorities will assist government in getting the quick results necessary to progress talks on the TIEA.”*

A formal announcement on the framework for the TIEA will be made at the Canada-EU Summit, which is taking place today in Ottawa.

Founded in 1999, CERT is a permanent association for dialogue on major trade and investment matters among senior business leaders, Canadian and European, and among business leaders and governments. Its membership includes: Alcan, Interbrew, Bombardier, GPC International, Tractebel (Suez) TSX Group, Novartis, MDS, NOVA Chemicals, CGI, Blake, Cassels & Graydon LLP, SNC Lavalin, Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, Forest Products of Canada, Spirits Canada, Canadian Chamber of Commerce, EU Chamber of Commerce in Toronto and the American European Community Association.

At CERT’s Third Annual CEO Round Table that took place at the TSX Conference & Broadcast Centre on 21 November 2003 in Toronto, CEOs, business executives and political decision-makers from Canada and the EU gathered for talks on the investment component of the Canada-EU relationship. Among those who spoke at the event were John Brock, President & CEO of Interbrew, The Hon. Bill Graham, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Barbara Stymiest, Chief Executive Officer, TSX Group and H.E. Eric Hayes, EU Ambassador to Canada. The key outcomes from the event were submitted to Minister Peterson and Commissioner Lamy.

For further information: Jason Langrish, Director, Canada Europe Round Table for Business (CERT), 416-598-0055 or 011 32 473 938 555 (cell), j.langrish@canada-europe.be