

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **CANADIAN & EU GOVERNMENTS MEET WITH CERT BUSINESS LEADERS**

Ottawa/ Brussels, 16 December 1999—for immediate release

After the Canada-EU Summit in Ottawa today, Canadian Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew, European Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy and Finland's Minister of Foreign Trade, Kimmo Sasi, will meet key Canadian and European business leaders involved with the Canada Europe Round Table (CERT), to discuss major trade and investment issues. During this meeting, CERT will also officially receive responses from both the Canadian government and European Commission to their initial submission document of 16 June 1999.

In addressing the importance of Canada-EU business links, Daniel Gagnier, Vice President of Corporate Affairs for Alcan and CERT's Canadian spokesman said:

“We're encouraged to see that many of the June recommendations have been picked up in the responses. We believe that our recommendations on electronic commerce have certainly been instrumental in helping to progress the EU-Canada Joint Declaration on E-Commerce at the Summit. This further demonstrates that CERT is a key platform for business and is meeting its objectives in getting its issues on the government's agendas.”

After this Thursday's meeting, CERT will closely study the official responses put forth by both the Canadian government and European Commission, and will continue to work closely with its members to develop a second submission document that continues to serve the importance of business dialogue.

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**Notes to editors:**

1. CERT realizes that business has a very important role to play in helping shape the trade agenda. As was evident in the run-up to the Seattle Ministerial, the general public is not always convinced that increased international trade and investment is of direct benefit to them. Given the fact that we remain committed to the need for another WTO round, and indeed further liberalization, it is incumbent on business leaders, to play a leading role in making the case for trade. CERT believes that it is important to convince all people that liberalized trade and investment improves the prosperity and quality of life for all people.
2. CERT was launched in Brussels on 16 June 1999 by Canadian and European businesses. CERT is the only platform for business dialogue with the Canadian government, European institutions and European Member States. CERT presented Sir Leon Brittan, (then Vice President of the European Commission) and Minister Sergio Marchi, (then Canadian Minister for Trade), detailed recommendations on key trade related issues.

3. The original CERT submission document and the Canadian government and European Commission response papers can be found at <http://www.canada-europe.org>