

## **CANADA AND RUSSIA STRENGTHEN BILATERAL PARTNERSHIPS DURING TEAM CANADA VISIT TO MOSCOW**

February 14, 2002  
Ottawa, Ontario

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien welcomed today a new Canada-Russia Joint Action Plan to strengthen bilateral cooperation, a joint statement on co-operation in the field of nuclear energy and the conclusion of negotiations on a customs cooperation agreement. In addition, Canada will contribute \$5 million to support the process of chemical weapons destruction in Russia. Today's announcements followed a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"Together with our historic Team Canada 2002 trade mission to Russia, today's agreements are firm steps toward a greater partnership with Russia. The Canada-Russia Action Plan is a concrete indication of our commitment to bring our relationship with Russia to a new level," said the Prime Minister.

The Canada-Russia Action Plan aims to modernize Canada-Russia relations and outlines areas where the two countries will work together to strengthen political, economic and cultural ties. Under the Canada-Russia Statement on Co-operation in the Field of Nuclear Energy, the two countries have agreed to start work on a memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Canada and Russia have also concluded negotiations on a customs cooperation and mutual assistance agreement and will now take the necessary steps to sign and bring the agreement into force. This agreement will establish a formal and legal framework for the exchange of intelligence and information to help prevent and investigate customs offences.

Additional information on the Action Plan and Joint Statement are attached.

Funding for today's announcement was provided for in the December 2001 federal budget and is therefore built into the existing fiscal framework.

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### **Background**

#### **Canada-Russia Joint Action Plan**

Canada and Russia have adopted a Joint Action Plan for an Enhanced Bilateral Partnership to further develop and strengthen political, economic and cultural ties. The Plan calls for enhanced cooperation and discussion on key issues and sectors of mutual interest such as foreign affairs, defence, trade and investment, new technologies, the environment, social affairs, culture and Arctic and northern issues. The Action Plan also highlights Canada and Russia's commitment to advancing Russia's integration into the World Trade Organization.

#### **Canada-Russia Joint Statement on Co-operation in the Field of Nuclear Energy**

Canada and Russia have agreed to start work on a memorandum of understanding on the peaceful use of nuclear energy between the Ministry of the Russian Federation on Atomic Energy and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Both countries have noted potential for expanded and enhanced collaboration, particularly in areas such as innovative reactors, nuclear fuel cycles, commercial applications of existing reactors; radioactive waste management and disposal; and uranium enrichment services. Canada and Russia have a long history of cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy under the *Agreement for Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy between the Government of Canada and the Government of the Russian Federation* in force since 1989.