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CanadaExport

Dep. of External Affairs
Min. des Affaires extérieures

APR 13 1997



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Vol.15, No. 6 — April 7, 1997

Third Americas Business Forum

Art Eggleton to Lead Business Delegation to Brazil

Minister for International Trade Art Eggleton will lead a Canadian delegation of some 60 business people to the Americas Business Forum in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, May 13-15, 1997.

Already in its third year — the first two get-togethers were in Denver, Colorado, and Cartagena, Colombia — the Forum is a special venue where the private sector is invited to exchange views on the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Trade Ministers' Meeting focussing on the FTAA — offers an excellent opportunity to form a cohesive private-sector voice to provide input to policy makers and to shape the direction of free trade in the Hemisphere.

barriers, investments and services, and infrastructure.

Networking potential

In addition, there will be tremendous opportunities for participants to network with the 1,000 or so business representatives expected to attend from the 34 countries (all except Cuba) that make up the Western Hemisphere.

The Forum — which immediately precedes the one-day Hemispheric

This year's Forum will include workshops on such issues as market access, standards and non-tariff

Brazil is Canada's largest export market in Latin America, with 1996 two-way trade topping \$2.5 billion —

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Due to technical problems at the production level, we were unable to forward your current issue of CanadaExport on time.

EDC Sets Records in 1996

Export Development Corporation (EDC) supported a record \$22 billion of Canadian exports in 1996, serving almost 3,000 customers and increasing business volume by 28 per cent. Over 18,000 other firms benefitted indirectly from EDC activities, when they acted as suppliers to EDC-financed transactions.

In 1996, the proportion of small and medium-sized exporters assisted by the Corporation rose 23 per cent over the previous year, accounting for over 85 per cent of its customer base. Also in 1996, the volume of exports by EDC's smaller customers rose 36 per cent to \$3.8 billion, while nearly 140 of EDC's smallest customers expanded their export sales to more than \$1 million.

Responding to strong demand for exports to higher-risk markets, EDC committed an additional \$1.5 billion in financing for these markets in 1996. Total financing available for higher-risk markets was more than \$5 billion. At the same time, the agency reduced restrictions on insurance coverage in 33 higher-risk markets.

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