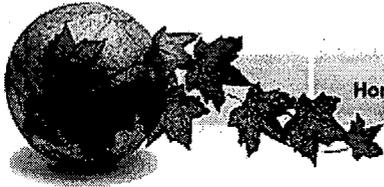


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GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE ON CANADIAN SMEs IN THE WORLD ECONOMY: DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE BUSINESS-GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP FOR INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS

November, 1996

The following is the Government response to the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade contained in its report tabled in the House of Commons on June 19, 1995. These recommendations result from the review by the Standing Committee of testimony received during the First Session of the Thirty-fifth Parliament.

1. The federal government needs to define still more clearly its role in international trade and business development. The Committee recommends that any review of the government's role be guided by the following principles:

In October 1995, International Trade Minister Roy MacLaren, also speaking on behalf of Industry Minister John Manley, announced the government's International Business Development (IBD) strategy. This strategy outlined the federal government's initiatives to define its role in international business development. Government has recognized that to strengthen IBD performance, and to expand the number of internationally successful firms, it must pursue its roles of:

- helping companies develop the skills and knowledge necessary to conduct business in international markets;
- gathering and disseminating commercial intelligence and information;
- sharing risk through cost-shared business development initiatives;
- acting as a broker, primarily in dealings with foreign governments;
- providing financing for exporting;
- advocating or protecting the interests of Canadian business/industry abroad;
- negotiating and maintaining market access;
- facilitating partnerships, such as strategic alliances and joint ventures, both at home and abroad;
- facilitating the exchange of knowledge and technology between Canadian and foreign organizations;
- helping to expand the cooperative R & D activities that take place between Canadian and foreign organizations;
- promoting investment to Canada;
- promoting tourism to Canada;
- encouraging Canadian business to play a role in sustainable development of the Developing World; and,
- promoting Canadian culture and educational institutions in foreign markets.

The government's IBD strategy acknowledged that each department has a role to play. Central to the strategy is building a domestic Team Canada approach to strengthen government's overall IBD effort