

The government's total investment in Access North America will be \$27 million over four years. These funds represent a new commitment by the government.

Let me make one thing clear. Access North America is not just another trade program. In fact, it contains some very innovative components.

I would like to briefly outline some of these components. During the next fiscal year, we will establish the first-ever Canadian Business Centre in Mexico City. This Centre compliments our new trade office in Monterrey that I opened in January.

This Centre will also be unique. It will be equipped to host solo Canadian trade shows and will provide companies with meeting space. Canadian companies will also have access to temporary offices, business support and translation services on site.

Perhaps most significantly, the Canadian Business Centre will operate on a cost-recovery basis, in partnership with Canadian industry, enabling these funds to be applied to the operations and activities of the Centre.

For companies that are new to the Mexican market, we will establish NEWMEX -- or the New Exporters to Mexico Program. NEWMEX will introduce a number of Canadian companies to Mexico through briefings on such topics as customs procedures, shipping, labelling, and financial and legal matters.

NEWMEX follows closely in the footsteps of the highly successful New Exporters to Border States -- or NEBS -- Program that we established some years ago for the United States.

We will also be expanding our Fairs and Missions Program for Mexico because they have a proven track record of success in that growing market. Access North America will add more than 40 prominent events annually.

In addition, we will be expanding our Fairs and Missions Program for the United States in those sectors offering specific opportunities resulting from the NAFTA.

Market information and export education will be key to taking advantage of opportunities in Mexico. Access North America will put into place an extensive program of seminars, workshops, sectoral market updates and market niche studies in locations right across Canada. The objective is to acquaint business with the specific opportunities in that market and equip them with the knowledge to pursue them.