

3.71 ALGERIA

Many opportunities exist in the high tech sectors in Algeria. Telecommunications, computer hardware and software, as well as consulting services are among the more active subsectors. The Algerian PTT is planning to vastly expand its telecommunications network, with new public switching contracts expected to involve tens of thousands of new lines a year for the next five years. As well, other areas such as spectrum management are being discussed by the PTT.

As the former state-run companies begin to downsize their work forces and attempt to increase their efficiency and productivity, they are turning increasingly to high tech solutions. Computerization will continue, but consulting services are also required to ensure that the new hardware will bring with it solutions rather than problems.

The Algerian Government has imposed import restrictions on some electronic equipment, notably consumer products, but equipment which is essential for the recovery of the Algerian economy is still admitted. Financing remains a concern and long delays are not uncommon as the Algerian government is reviewing all expenditures, sometimes several times. The sector remains one with promise and given the reputation for quality that Canadian high tech firms enjoy, Canada continues to succeed in the Algerian market.

3.72 GULF STATES

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGIES

Arabian Gulf Emirates are a burgeoning market of advanced technologies, especially those with defence and security applications. Canadian companies are currently pursuing 12 defence projects in the area with a potential value of \$5.6 billion. The effort is exemplified by the number of firms which participated at IDEX in mid-February 1993.

In addition, Canadian firms continue to enjoy an enviable reputation in the Gulf for quality telecommunications goods and services due in large measure by the work of Bell Canada International and Northern Telecom in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Middle East. The market is attracting an increasing number of Canadian visitors. In late January, for example, fifteen Canadian firms participated in or were represented at MECOM '93 in Bahrain, the premier telecommunications trade show in the Arabian Gulf. All Canadian participants indicated success either in direct sales or in contacts for future business. The show attracted a select business audience, including representatives of the major telecommunications authorities in the region and oil companies such as ARAMCO that operate independent communications facilities. Buyer interest was apparent for products and services ranging from mobile telephone systems, satellite communications, data handling, batteries, to portable PC film editing systems and software with training and management applications.

COMPUTERS

During the occupation, Iraqis looted Kuwait's supply of computer hardware, software and peripherals. Liberation brought with it a tremendous need to resupply the university, various ministries, businesses and other institutions. While "emergency phase" restocking is over, significant computer requirements remain to be met. Kuwait is continuing to make purchasing decisions largely based on price. Western firms with competitive prices have been very successful in this post-liberation market.