

ANNEX

In February 1991, the Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, the President of the United States, George Bush and the President of the United States of Mexico, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, announced their intention to negotiate a North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to create the world's largest free trade market. Negotiations began in June 1991 with the first meeting of the Ministers of International Trade of the three countries concerned, at which they agreed, among other things, to work toward the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers currently applied to goods produced in their countries. Negotiations are under way to establish the most effective means of eliminating these barriers. Canadian companies or producers who already export or import, or are interested in doing so, have a direct stake in NAFTA's outcome. To ensure that the Government is better able to serve these interests, views are being invited from the public on the pace at which the trade barriers in question should be eliminated.

We have already sought the advice of the International Trade Advisory Committee (ITAC) and the Sectoral Advisory Groups on International Trade (SAGITs). These groups, which provide advice on major trade issues such as the Uruguay Round negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA), will seek to provide, by the end of the summer, the detailed views of the private sector on specific market access issues related to North American trilateral trade. The federal government is also consulting closely with the provincial and territorial governments. Interested parties that have already communicated their views to these bodies do not need to make a separate submission to the Government unless they so desire.

Submissions should be as specific as possible concerning the products of export interest to the United States and Mexico (including the classification number under the Harmonized System where available); they should also identify, where relevant, the current barriers (tariffs, non-tariff barriers) that impede access to Canadian exports of manufactured and resource-based products, as well as agriculture and food products. Examples of non-tariff barriers are quantitative limits or import quotas, import licensing arrangements, discriminatory government