

agricultural products, including the elimination of barriers to our important agricultural exports and a prohibition of export subsidies. The era of the tariff is finally over. We must get on with addressing other, more pressing and difficult issues that distort business decisions about where and how to invest, to the detriment of smaller economies such as that of Canada.

Second, Canadians expect us to work closely with business and workers, not only to ensure that the rules we are negotiating underpin growth and job creation, but also to encourage our transformation from being a trading nation into a country that can proudly and fairly portray itself as a nation of traders. The Government has re-evaluated in depth its trade development programs with a view to increasing significantly their impact and relevance. I shall return to this theme shortly.

Mr. Speaker, let me briefly outline how the Government intends to move towards these two objectives: the removal of barriers and the attraction of investment; and the further promotion of an export commitment among Canadians.

First, we plan to work with our trading partners to deepen the international rules governing trade, investment and technology to discipline practices that disadvantage Canada.

Foremost in this regard, we must continue to manage effectively the Canada-United States economic relationship. A united Canada has done well in opening the U.S. market, while protecting Canadian sensitivities in such areas as cultural industries and supply-managed agricultural products. The ongoing, effective management of this special relationship requires vigilance and national teamwork to ensure that Canadian interests are defended whenever U.S. regulators or special interests attempt to bend the rules of either the NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement] or the WTO [World Trade Organization].

We shall pursue reforms that reduce the possibility of disputes with the United States concerning the issues of subsidies, dumping and the operation of trade remedy laws. We shall seek better access to U.S. government procurement contracts and greater opportunities to compete with regard to financial services.

Multilaterally, we shall remain in the forefront of the work under way to ensure that the World Trade Organization becomes a dynamic force for extending rule making beyond the level achieved in the Uruguay Round. The WTO has an ambitious agenda of negotiations already under way in such areas as financial services, maritime transport and government procurement. There is also considerable unfinished business with regard to trade-distorting agricultural subsidies. These are important issues for Canada.