

Many Arab countries, I am happy to say, do not impose the wide range of tariff and non-tariff barriers that are so widespread today in other markets of the world. There is little protectionism.

All of these factors should encourage us to pursue the Arab markets with more vigor. Canada has only begun to scratch the surface of the export opportunities that exist. These markets require a strong personal commitment by you, the Canadian exporters. It is not enough to make occasional trips to the area and leave the rest to the telex and telephone. This is not the Arab way of doing business. Their style is to develop and nurture personal relationships, and it's a style that has many rewards. I commend it to you. It will help you to keep abreast of opportunities, and to capitalize on them when they arise. It should also be an immensely rewarding human experience for you, because -- leaving aside the business opportunities -- the warm hospitality of Arab friends has no equal.

Like many other countries, including Canada, the Arab countries wish to promote their industrial development through technology transfers, joint ventures and education. Canada is already active in these fields. For example, about 3,000 students from Arab countries are studying in Canadian secondary and technical schools and universities. These relationships will be important in consolidating and expanding our markets in the long term.

Given your personal commitment, given the attractions of the Arab markets, and given my Government's emphasis on increasing trade, productive investment and manpower training, we can and will pull together to exploit effectively our opportunities. All of these elements logically reinforce our interest in expanding our economic and trade links with the Arab world.

The Canada-Arab Business Council is uniquely suited to play an important role