

ten transparency-related issues) was a key outcome of the Ministerial meeting in Toronto, November 3-4. These measures were compiled on the basis of input from the business community (especially through various Americas Business Fora), FTAA Working Groups established subsequent to the first Summit of the Americas, and governments of the participating countries.

Canada is strongly supportive of the underlying objective of supporting or reinforcing ongoing business activities in the hemisphere by reducing red tape, seeking greater clarity on rules and regulations, improving customs clearance procedures and reducing business transaction costs. In many ways, these day-to-day business transaction issues matter more to businesses than traditional trade barriers and demonstrate to companies throughout the Americas the real and tangible benefits that can be realized within the FTAA process. It should also be emphasized that the work on business facilitation is ongoing and will continue throughout the life of the negotiations. In the short term, officials will be concentrating their efforts on implementation of the measures adopted in Toronto and on developing a second package of business facilitation measures for adoption by Ministers in Argentina in April 2001.

Consultations with Canadians

Recommendations 1 and 2

The Government is committed to conducting the FTAA negotiations as openly and inclusively as possible and to consulting closely with Canadians throughout the FTAA negotiating process.

The Government has been, and remains, engaged in an on-going, transparent and accessible consultation process. Consultations to date reveal that Canadians realize that we live in an increasingly interconnected world, and that they favour liberalized trade. There is also an appreciation of the need to ensure that the benefits of trade are distributed widely and that Canadian values are protected. The Government will continue its outreach and consultation efforts to keep Canada's trade agenda attuned to what Canadians are saying as negotiations proceed and issues become more clearly defined.

