

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to mark the release of this Summary Report on Multi-Stakeholder Consultations regarding Canada's initial position with respect to the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

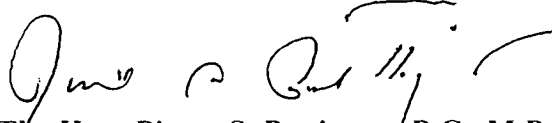
The consultations were undertaken in partnership with provincial and territorial governments — and with the valuable participation of other federal departments — as part of a broad-based effort by the Government of Canada to ensure a more informed dialogue about the GATS and to prepare our initial GATS negotiating position.

Twelve multi-stakeholder sessions were held between June and October 2000. Government of Canada officials heard from representatives of citizen-based organizations, public interest groups, labour, business, local governments and consumer associations. The Report provides an overview of the questions, comments and concerns that these stakeholders expressed during the consultation sessions.

Developing a sound position on trade in services will be vital to advancing the interests of Canada's key knowledge-based industries, which include such sectors as architectural, engineering and information technology services. As the services sector is responsible for the creation of most new jobs in Canada, ensuring market access abroad for services exporters will be key to securing Canada's long-term economic prosperity.

The process ahead will be a long one, and the Government of Canada remains committed to keeping all Canadians informed of its progress during the years ahead. Indeed, Canada is a world leader in providing open and transparent government and continues to advance this cause in international forums of all types.

I wish to thank the provincial and territorial governments for their co-operation in undertaking these consultations with the Government of Canada. I also want to thank the participants themselves for making the sessions a success.



The Hon. Pierre S. Pettigrew, P.C., M.P.
Minister for International Trade

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MAY 3 2001

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