

I ALSO WANT TO THANK THE CANADA-ARAB BUSINESS COUNCIL AND THE EGYPT-CANADA BUSINESS COUNCIL, WHOSE EXECUTIVE AND MEMBERSHIP ARE HERE IN LARGE NUMBERS. BOTH HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO CANADA'S TRADE EFFORTS IN THE REGION. BOTH WORK VERY CLOSELY WITH OUR OWN PEOPLE HERE IN THIS BUILDING AND IN THE EMBASSIES ABROAD IN IMPLEMENTING OUR TRADE STRATEGY FOR THE ARAB WORLD.

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A FEW MOMENTS OF YOUR TIME TONIGHT TO TALK ABOUT CANADA'S MARKETS IN THE ARAB WORLD AND WHAT WE CAN AND SHOULD BE DOING TO EXPLOIT THEM. BUT BEFORE I DO THAT, LET ME TRY TO SET OUR TRADE STRATEGY INTO A DOMESTIC PERSPECTIVE.

IN THE THRONE SPEECH OF A WEEK AGO MONDAY THIS GOVERNMENT LAID OUT ITS TRADE OBJECTIVES FOR THE NEXT FEW YEARS. CANADIANS HAVE RECOGNIZED THAT TO PROSPER AND GROW WE MUST COMPETE EFFECTIVELY IN GLOBAL MARKETS. TO DO THIS WE FACE A SERIES OF CHALLENGES:

- TO BUILD ON THE OPPORTUNITIES CREATED IN THE NORTH AMERICAN MARKET BY FREE TRADE;
- TO ACHIEVE A MORE OPEN GLOBAL TRADING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS;
- AND TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EMERGING POSSIBILITIES AROUND THE WORLD.

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