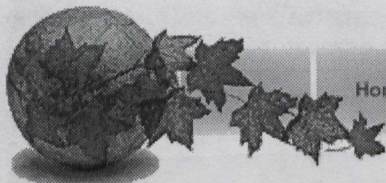


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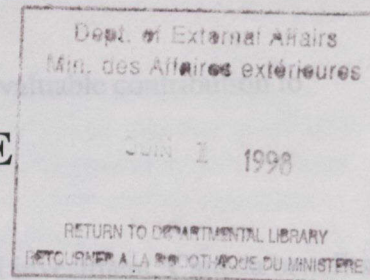
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GOVERNMENT RESPONSE



TO THE REPORT ON

CANADA AND THE MULTILATERAL AGREEMENT ON INVESTMENT

BY

THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE,

TRADE DISPUTES AND INVESTMENT

OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

536023/3

INTRODUCTION

On October 9, 1997, the Minister for International Trade wrote to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, requesting parliamentary consideration of Canada's participation in the current negotiations toward a Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI).

The objective of this request was to encourage Canadians to provide substantive input and guidance to the Government on Canada's participation in the MAI negotiations, which were launched in May 1995. The Government approved Canada's participation in the negotiations and a negotiating mandate, upon joint recommendations from the Minister for International Trade, the Minister of Industry and the Minister of Finance. The Government has, from the outset, sought to proceed in an open and transparent manner, both to engender broad public support for Canada's aims and objectives in the negotiations, and, moreover, to ensure that the negotiating positions that Canada advances in Paris serve the best interests of all Canadians.

The Standing Committee referred the matter to the Subcommittee on International Trade, Trade Disputes and Investment, and public hearings were held in November 1997. Anticipating an intensification of the negotiations in the new year, the Minister for International Trade requested that the Subcommittee finalize