

Transnational corporations would include large multinational corporations with operations in a number of countries around the globe. In order to effectively support or establish foreign subsidiaries, transnational corporations make investments in target countries that contribute significantly to overall global investment flows. In fact, the *1994 World Investment Report* estimates that the world's largest 100 transnational corporations (not including those in banking and finance) account for about one-third of the total FDI outflows of their countries of origin.

Thus, one measure of the importance of the countries selected for this report, including the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, The Netherlands, and Switzerland, is the degree to which their transnational companies are active investors in foreign countries. According to this measure, almost all of the top transnational companies in the world are domiciled in the seven countries selected for this report. Data for the top 100 transnational corporations, ranked according to the extent of the foreign assets held by each corporation in 1992 and classified by industry type, are outlined in Table 2.

Canada is, of course, a relatively small country, and only three Canadian firms are included on the list of the top 100 transnational firms. The United States is clearly a leading global investor, with 28 U.S. companies, or more than one-quarter of the top 100 transnational corporations listed by the *1994 World Investment Report*. In total, these 28 U.S. transnational corporations own U.S. \$391 billion of the U.S. \$1,200 billion in foreign assets held abroad by the top 100 transnational corporations, or 32 per cent of the total. Thus, the importance of the United States to overall global investment trends is indisputable.