

- **political**, because rising wealth is necessary (though not sufficient) for rising standards of democracy, human and labour rights observance, environmental protection and other key contributors to the creation and maintenance of successful societies and states; and
- **values-based**, because Canadians believe in the right of all human beings to a decent life, and creating opportunities to improve the condition of the poorer (and especially the world's poorest) is an obligation they acknowledge and willingly accept.

How do we pursue these objectives? Ultimately, all trade is bilateral, even if some of the ground rules are set at the regional or global level. We deal with bilateral problems, and increase bilateral opportunities, using several distinct ways of managing and enriching these interactions:

- **multilateral** agreements and negotiations, under the umbrella of the WTO;
- **regional** agreements and negotiations, notably NAFTA and the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA); and
- **bilateral** trade agreements such as those with Chile, Israel and Costa Rica; complementary bilateral arrangements on trade and trade-related issues such as investment, or R&D cooperation; bilateral negotiations such as those with four other Central American countries and Singapore; and a range of bilateral work programs and high-level contacts designed to build shared approaches and to resolve differences.

Canadian trade policy shows a history of activism at each of these levels. For over half a century, Canada has leveraged its influence and pursued its interests through multilateral bodies, namely the GATT and the WTO. We have also, in the last 20 years, renewed our historical interest in bilateral and regional trade agreements, an interest that had waned with the reduction in the tariff preference given to Commonwealth countries after the United Kingdom joined the European Economic Community (now the EU) in 1973. In the 1980s, the governments of the day recognized the increasing integration of the Canadian and