

SECTION II

The Business of Engineers and the Contemporary Market

Introduction

Although Canadian engineering firms have demonstrated considerable success competing in export markets, they will continue to face significant challenges in the coming years. Most observers would agree that the international marketplace for engineering and construction services has become more competitive, complex and unpredictable since the 1960s and 1970s. It appears that competition has increased as a result of forces which have squeezed the profession simultaneously from opposite directions. Not only has there been a declining number of attractive capital projects since the early 1980s, particularly in middle-income and other developing countries, but there has also emerged an increasing number of firms competing for these projects. Moreover, evolving international governmental financing and development assistance policies are affecting the ability of efficient firms to compete fairly for projects in many LDCs, particularly the developing nations in Asia critical to world trade in these sectors.

The changing character of today's marketplace for engineering and construction services can be attributed to several structural developments in the global economy.