

A message to the Canadian business community

From the Minister for International Trade

Pierre Pettigrew



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The September 11 attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C. have had a profound impact on North American security, the Canada-U.S. border and, by extension, on our trade relationship with the United States, our most important trading partner.

In light of these new realities, we must be more vigilant than ever in ensuring the security and integrity of our common border. In recent weeks, Canada has taken several steps to secure the flow of bilateral trade, and we continue to work closely with U.S. authorities to develop effective ways to implement these.

An important priority for Canada is to share this strong commitment to action with our U.S. partners, both in government and business, so that they fully understand what we are doing to achieve our common goal, a secure and open border. As Canadian businesspeople, you can make a significant contribution to this effort by informing your American business partners and clients about Canada's initiatives to improve the flow of goods and people across the border.

To help you get these messages across, and to make sure that you have the essential facts you need when faced with questions about Canada's actions since September 11, we have prepared an information sheet "The Canada-U.S. Border: Secure and Open to Trade" (see opposite).

This information sheet has been designed in such a way that it can be used as a convenient handout at business meetings, trade shows or other events. Additional copies are available from the United States Relations Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade at (613) 944-7960, or can be downloaded from the Business Development page of the Canada-U.S. Relations Web site (<http://www.can-am.gc.ca>).

These are challenging times — quite unlike anything we have ever experienced before. But Canada and the United States share the most important, the most successful and the most dynamic trading relationship in the world, and that does not change. We will cope together with temporary slowdowns, whether they are in the world economy or our own border traffic, and will overcome problems together, as we have in the past.

As Minister for International Trade, I invite you to be part of this collective effort to help Canada — and therefore each one of us — remain competitive and prosperous.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call (613) 944-7960.

Together we shall succeed.