

That was the first comprehensive multilateral trading agreement in the modern world. It paved the way for much of the economic well-being enjoyed by so many countries in the post war world.

Our purpose has always been to strengthen the multilateral trading system. And we do that in distinctive Canadian ways.

For example, we recognize that there is a difference in approach to the new GATT round between developed and developing countries.

There is need in the world for bridges. There is need for countries that are rooted in the developed world, as we are, which can connect with developing countries. We have been doing that. Jim Kelleher and I have sent trade delegations to Brazil, to Central America, to the ASEAN countries and to India, to sit down and talk about what can be on the negotiating agenda. To ensure that it is an agenda for the whole world - for the developing and the developed countries.

We have offered Montreal as the place where the Ministers can meet. Wherever the negotiations are, Canada will be there actively building a more open multilateral trading system that is strong enough to attract the participation and the support of all the countries in the world. That is the essence of our policy. It is for the world. We are getting Canada prepared for the next century - a century that does not belong to any one country, but to the world, and to the people who can compete in it.

Obviously that will include the United States. In September, after extensive consultations across Canada, the Prime Minister invited the Americans to discuss trade negotiations.

If they agree to negotiations, that could lead to a freer trade arrangement with the United States if such a deal would be in the long-term interest of Canadians. If we cannot make a good deal we will make no deal. Ladies and gentlemen, as someone who knows this country and has confidence in our strength and confidence in our vision I know that we can make a deal that will be in the interests of this country.