

Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon:

I'd like to begin by re-emphasizing the importance that the Government of Canada attaches to the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round; our support for the efforts, past, present and future, deployed by the Director-General, Peter Sutherland, in support of that objective; and our conviction that whatever disagreements remain outstanding among the Contracting Parties, we will succeed in the end because we must succeed. The world needs this Round, and so does Canada.

As is natural in the final stages of any important negotiation, and there are few more important than this one, recent attention has focussed on remaining differences, but I would like to take this opportunity to recall how much has already been accomplished, and what Canada stands to gain from a successful conclusion.

While the old cliché still holds that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed, it is clear that the Canadian exporter and worker can look forward to new sales and new markets abroad, meaning new jobs at home, at a time when the Canadian economic recovery is already export-led. For the same reason, the Canadian consumer is poised to benefit significantly from the reduction of tariffs and other barriers projected for the final outcome.

The outcome should start to put an end to the destructive grain-subsidy wars that have proved so costly to Canadian farmers and taxpayers. Canadian farmers would have improved access to markets abroad, and country-specific non-tariff barriers, like those used by the United States and the EC [European Community] to limit Canadian agricultural exports, will now be covered by a commonly agreed GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] rule.

We will continue to work to ensure that a GATT deal also benefits farm producers operating under farm supply management programs in Canada, by providing a more secure and predictable trade environment.

A successful Round would be of substantial benefit to our red meat producers. Canadian beef and pork producers should achieve improved access, especially to Asian markets.

Substantial tariff reductions would help our forest products industries; agreement to harmonize tariffs at low rates should lead to new export opportunities for our chemical and pharmaceutical producers, and lower tariffs will help our nickel, copper and zinc producers.