

vanguard of a tremendous initiative. Well-developed legal systems and institutional structures based on the rule of law are fundamental to the stability of democratic societies, and Canadian lawyers and judges and professional associations are ready to provide the relevant expertise. I wish you every success.

Canadian law firms have also been hired by countries such as Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine to advise on legal reform in areas ranging from constitutional law to insolvency law. This growing trend toward legal technical assistance is not unique to Canada - international financial institutions, most notably the World Bank, are also co-ordinating funding of legal expertise. My own department, for its part, is actively engaged in promoting services exports in general, and legal services exports in particular. These present invaluable opportunities for professional development and expansion that should not be ignored.

These are exciting times for the legal profession. The CBA's initiatives are giving Canadian lawyers new perspectives and opportunities, and we in government can only benefit from the insights you gain in the process. An ongoing dialogue among the legal community, business and government is essential to the development of an intelligent response to economic trends. I, for my part, shall try to ensure that our lines of communication remain open.

Thank you.