

(or APEC) forum. But I believe that there is room to be more dynamic and creative, including through possible bilateral agreements and perhaps through the accession to the NAFTA by at least some Asian economies over the next few years.

The other key focus for further rule-making and access improvements is multilateral. I believe that Canada must work hard to ensure that the new World Trade Organization (WTO) gets off to a fast start in 1995.

The international trading community must move quickly to ensure that the WTO develops an agenda to deal with emerging issues (such as the possible convergence or harmonization of national competition policies), as well as important unfinished business (such as the reform of anti-dumping regimes, further liberalization of government purchasing practices, and the final elimination of all barriers that still impede our exports of more fully processed resource-based products). We seek a forward-looking and balanced work program for the WTO that reflects Canadian interests.

Finally, I want to reassure this committee that the Government will vigorously defend the market access achieved through negotiations and realized in practice through the efforts of our export community. We will not hesitate to challenge other nations when they do not live up to their international trade and economic obligations, and Canadian interests and jobs are threatened as a result. We will be active bilaterally, and we will use the dispute settlement provisions found in our international trade agreements to defend the interests of all Canadians.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to responding to questions that the committee may have on the direction of Canadian trade policy and the international trade opportunities and challenges faced by Canadian exporters.