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Enhanced Support for SME Exporters as the Government and Banks Join Forces

Minister for International Trade Roy MacLaren recently announced a new initiative for enhancing the ability of small- and medium-size exporters (SMEs) to access export financing and information. It involves a series of measures detailed in the just-released report

Servicing SME Exporters - Government and Banks Working Towards Better Support.

As part of this initiative, information about help for exporters will now be available through the extensive networks of Canadian banks. The banks will also join

forces with the Export Development Corporation (EDC) to provide enhanced support for SME exporters.

The focus will be on three areas where support to exporters was deemed needy of improvement: access to information; short-term financing; and medium-term export financing.

Markets Emerge as Ukraine on Road to Economic Renewal

Ukraine is attempting to steer a cautious but determined course on the new road to economic renewal.

The move could be a beacon for Canadian exporters!

Indeed, the Renaissance Eastern Europe Program, administered by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, has financed about 40 trade development initiatives between the Canadian private sector and Ukrainian partners. In addition, Canada's technical assistance program has funded more than 60 projects valued in excess of \$27 million.

The new fact is that, with the stabilization of the economy, a move toward a more market-oriented economy; and the implementation of the recently-agreed International Monetary Fund Economic Reform Program for Ukraine, the country increasingly is being seen as an export market well worth exploring — despite obstacles that include frequent changes in government regulations, delays, and a generally over-regulated economy.

That being said, and perhaps due to the natural interests of Canada's large Ukrainian community, several Canadian exporters already are active in this market, primarily through establishing joint ventures or investing directly.

For example:

- A joint venture has been established to build a large office complex in Kyiv;
- Another is with a large Ukrainian research institute to develop methanol and related technologies;
- Still others include:
 - the production of beverages in Lviv for marketing throughout the Ukraine;
 - The production of cheese for Pizza Hut outlets;
 - Shoe production;
 - The production of coffins;
 - The manufacture of marble-like bathroom slabs and tops; and
- A Canadian company is involved in the production of perogies!

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Information/ Access to Information

This component involves four new initiatives: 1) the *Road Map to Exporting and Export Finance*, which is a guide to key contacts who can assist an exporter; 2) the *Top Ten Export Programs*, a series of fact sheets which help to distil available information on the most frequently used programs and services; 3) the *InfoCentre Bulletin Board*, which can be accessed via a telephone using a personal computer and modem, thereby providing a whole raft of information on international market opportunities and export finance; and 4) training, a Canada-wide export and trade finance

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