

and medical products; communications and telecommunications; services; and environmental industries.

- **Europe** — A traditional market for Canadian exports and a source of inward investment and technologies, Europe continues to hold significant new opportunities for Canadian companies in the short and long term. The economic and political integration of western Europe, the establishment of democracies and market economies in eastern Europe and the growing economic interdependence of east and west, should guarantee Europe's vital role in Canada's trade profile for the foreseeable future. Maintaining and improving our access to existing and potential European goods, services, technologies and capital markets will remain important. While central and eastern European countries, including those of the former U.S.S.R., are still absorbing the costs of transition to market economies, real long-term growth prospects exist in several sectors of interest to Canada.
- **Africa and the Middle East** — On a selected basis, these diverse markets offer real, attractive opportunities for Canadian companies. The dramatic developments in the Middle East peace process and the market realignments resulting from the Gulf war have created significant trade opportunities, many over the short term. North Africa is our most important regional market on the African continent and pressing economic reforms are fuelling new business opportunities. The recent lifting of sanctions towards South Africa and the opening of a trade office in Johannesburg will help rejuvenate bilateral trade relations.

The Tools to Succeed

The federal government is actively reviewing its principal international business development programs and related sectoral competitiveness policies to establish a blueprint for action. Several priorities are outlined below.

The Trade Commissioner Service

The network of Trade Commissioners in Canada and some 100 offices around the world is the most effective tool available for helping Canadian firms penetrate foreign markets. The Trade Commissioner Service (TCS) represents the human face of the government's trade development support, working closely with companies to address their individual needs at home and abroad.

Trade Commissioners provide export counselling to prepare companies for their first forays internationally or to expand their international business horizons. They identify specific trade opportunities, provide advice to exploit them and open doors to make Canadian international business success a reality. Their daily networking enables Canada to reach influential decision makers around the world and identify valuable local partners for Canadian firms. Trade Commissioners play a vital monitoring and advocacy role abroad, regularly intervening with foreign governments to maintain and improve market access.

On the occasion of the 1994 Centenary of the TCS, the review will examine ways of strengthening the capability of trade officers to support companies' priority needs. A more strategic placement of TCS resources will be a related objective.