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# A Look Ahead to the Year 2000 with Minister Pettigrew

**T**o mark the start of the year 2000, *CanadExport* spoke with Minister for International Trade Pierre S.

*Pettigrew about what lies ahead for Canadian businesses in the international marketplace, and how the Department can help to ensure their success.*

**CanadExport:** Having been appointed Minister for International Trade only a short while ago, what are your thoughts on the portfolio thus far?

**Minister Pettigrew:** It has been a real challenge, but one that I relish. As you know, the global trade environment in which we operate and the competition that Canadians face internationally are becoming more and more complex. With the world economy becoming increasingly spe-

cialized and sophisticated, my main priority is to open markets for our businesses and provide them with the support they need to take full advantage of opportunities in those markets.

When I assumed the trade portfolio, I said that I would continue to pursue Canada's trade policy in the direction it was headed — to liberalize trade in our hemisphere, through the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and globally in all other parts of the world, through for example the European Free Trade Area, and in Asia Pacific.

But this is only one part of the picture. Equally important is providing our exporters with the tools and ser-

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## Focus on Aboriginal Exporters

*From left to right: JoAnna Townsend, Director, Export Services: Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Division (TSME), DFAIT; Steven Bearskin; Dorothy Grant; William Clark; Ray Ahenakew; Rosi Niedermayer, Aboriginal Portfolio (TSME). Inset: Phil Fontaine.*



Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), was the keynote speaker at a presentation entitled Canadian Aboriginal Exporters — Year 2000 and Beyond at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), December 9, 1999.

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