

Although we have a vast country stretching between two oceans, Canada has a relatively small population of 25 million people. Our technological expertise has been shaped not only by the enormity of the geographic challenge, but also by the fact that we live in one of the most extreme climates in the world.

Two weeks ago in Ottawa, the capital of Canada, the temperature was minus 19 degrees. Meanwhile, on our west coast, flowers were blooming. In the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia, our most westerly province, the temperature was plus 21 degrees. I mention this, because these variations within our country have forced us to develop a highly diverse technological base.

It is true that resources and raw materials are an important element of our exports, but our major sales items are manufactured goods. They take an ever-increasing share of our global export trade.

Canada recognizes the importance of Egypt as a trading partner. Your country is a major economic and political force in the Middle East. Your current Five Year Plan for development calls for expenditures in excess of forty billion Egyptian Pounds.

In terms of your economic growth, Canadian companies have much to offer in goods, services and technology. We are "North American" but not "American". We have unique areas of expertise that could be welcome in Egypt. I am thinking of such sectors as telecommunications, energy production and distribution, transportation, computer software and hardware, oil and gas technology and agriculture.

Examples abound: Canada was the first country in the world to have a domestic satellite network; with the James Bay Project we developed an enormous hydro-electric capacity in northern Quebec; with CANDU nuclear reactors we have the safest and most efficient system in the world; Egypt has chosen several hundred Canadian General Motors locomotives for its rail system; and Canada's ability to feed not only itself but many others is renowned.

Your development plan calls for increased emphasis on the private sector. This coincides well with our own objectives.

As the Minister responsible for Foreign Affairs and International Trade, I have made it a point on many of my trips abroad to invite Canadian businessmen who have interests in the particular region to join me for meetings during my visit.