

As a founding member, Canada attaches high priority to the work of the OECD. Accordingly, it will continue to promote further trade liberalization within the OECD by ensuring that the trade committee develops a concrete and achievable work program based on the post-Uruguay Round trade agenda. The focus of our priorities will be the issues of environment, investment, competition, technology and telecommunications.

#### **Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum**

Within the fast-growing Asia-Pacific region, Canada sees the APEC forum as an increasingly important vehicle for ensuring that international rules work better within a region of vital interest to Canada's economic future. Canada sees APEC as the primary instrument for the pursuit, on a regional basis, of our global trade liberalization agenda. Canada supports the vision developed by the Eminent Persons' Group and the APEC Business Blueprint developed by the Pacific Business Forum.

In his address to APEC trade ministers at Jakarta in November 1994, Minister for International Trade Roy MacLaren laid down four tracks for further progress in regard to APEC's trade liberalization agenda: (a) rapid implementation of the Uruguay Round commitments and accelerated tariff cuts; (b) investment liberalization; (c) a freeze on agricultural export subsidies; and (d) standards and conformance in one or two priority sectors. He also emphasized the necessity of ensuring that APEC meets the needs of all members, while serving as a useful vehicle for regional trade facilitation and economic co-operation.

Canada has actively participated in APEC's work in such areas as the environment, telecommunications, human resource development, marine resources conservation, fisheries and transportation. Canada also chairs the Economic Committee established at the Ministerial Meeting in Jakarta in November 1994. With respect to future work within APEC,

Canada anticipates much greater focus on small- and medium-sized enterprises.

#### **Multilateral Development Banks/International Financial Institutions**

Canada is a major contributor to various multilateral development banks, including the World Bank and various regional development banks: Asian Development Bank (AsDB), Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), African Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) which, along with the IMF, are often referred to as international financial institutions (IFIs). In fact, this country currently ranks fourth to seventh in terms of contributions to these specific institutions. Unfortunately, in part because of the limited international presence of many Canadian firms, Canada's procurement performance at the various development banks has been low relative to other OECD countries (in the range of tenth to twelfth). Currently, Canadian companies win approximately \$360 million per year in procurement from the various IFI lending programs. This represents only 1 percent to 2 percent of the total effective IFI market available to foreign suppliers, estimated to be about US\$12 billion per year.

And yet, IFI procurement is arguably more important to Canada's international business development efforts than to those of many other countries. IFI projects are targeted at developing countries — countries where Canada's export penetration is often very modest. They can therefore be an important vehicle by which to diversify Canadian trade, technology and investment beyond Canada's traditional markets.

The Government is therefore exploring various options to improve Canadian participation in multilateral bank procurement activities. These will focus on:

- identifying Canadian companies with an international presence and encouraging them to make the necessary investments to compete for IFI-related projects;