

assistance for Eastern Europe which, although on a modest scale, will establish training programs and institutional linkages.

Starting tomorrow in Montreal, there will be a series of Canada-USSR technology round-table meetings held across the country with a delegation of 12 Soviet technology and business experts.

I would like to turn now to the question of a possible free trade agreement between the U.S. and Mexico. I begin by noting the announcement made last weekend in Washington.

During their meeting President Bush and President Salinas concluded that a comprehensive free trade agreement was the best vehicle to achieve their shared objective of expanded trade and economic relations - to provide a "powerful engine", as they described it, for sustained growth, job creation and opportunity.

They agreed that the United States Trade Representative, Carla Hills, and the Mexican Secretary of Commerce and Industrial Development, Dr. Jaime Serra, would undertake the consultations and preparatory work needed to initiate such negotiations, in accordance with each country's internal procedures, and to report back to the two Presidents as soon as practicable, but in any event before their next meeting in December.

I expect that formal negotiations between the U.S. and Mexico could be announced later this year, perhaps on the occasion of President Bush's scheduled visit to Mexico in December, or perhaps even earlier. In the interim, the U.S. Administration will be working with Congress, examining various studies and completing their own analyses of U.S. Interests. The Government of Mexico will be carrying out its own preparations. President Salinas has already responded positively to a recommendation from the Mexican Senate to negotiate a free trade agreement with the United States, its largest trading partner.

This Government welcomes the U.S.- Mexico initiative to move in the direction of a possible free trade arrangement. Canada has, of course, already taken major steps to expand our trade and economic relations with each of these important trading partners and neighbours. We enjoy excellent relations with both governments, each of which has kept us informed of developments as they work