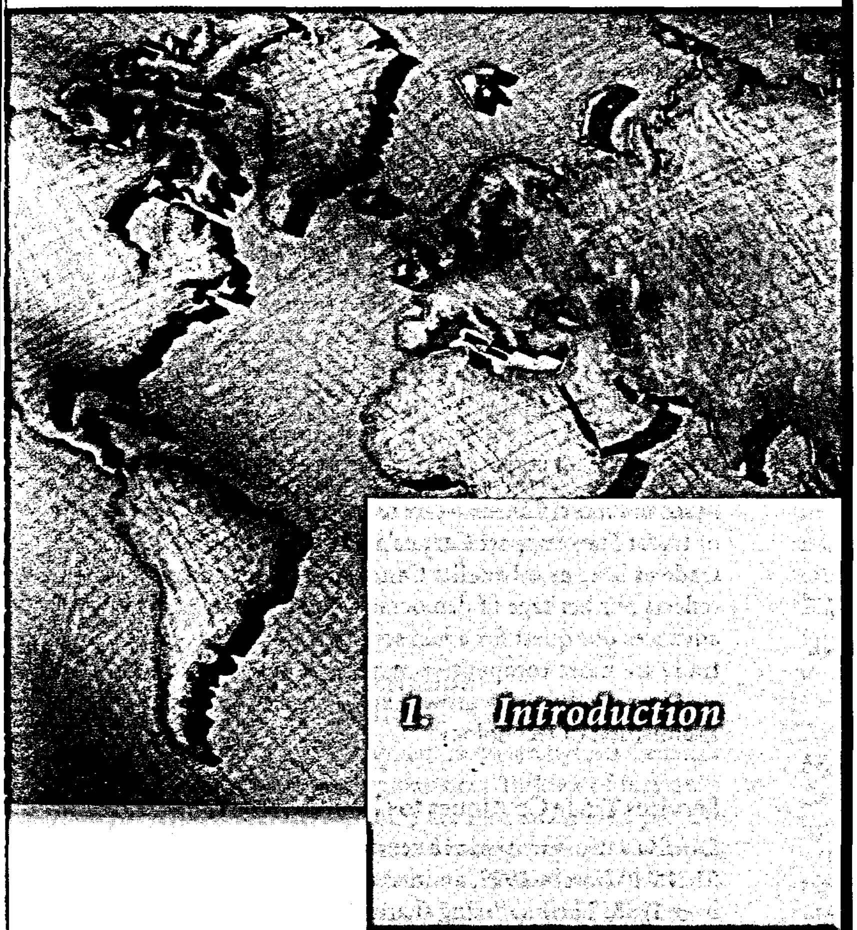

1. Introduction

http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/tna-nac

Canada is a trading country, and trade is vital to our continued prosperity. International trade accounts for one in every three jobs in Canada. Five years ago, exports of goods and services accounted for only 30 percent of our gross domestic product (GDP). That figure is now 43 percent, higher than any other G-7/G-8 nation. Foreign direct investment (FDI) in our country has experienced similar growth, rising 54 percent since 1993. The vast majority of the more than 1.9 million jobs created since 1993 have come from the growth in exports. There can be no doubt that Canada's exposure to international competition has energized our economy, spurred innovation and created hundreds of thousands of jobs for Canadians.

Although Canadians have been successful in selling to the world, our ability to fully exploit opportunities in key markets is often limited by a variety of barriers. To ensure secure and predictable access to the world for Canadian traders and investors, the Government will continue its efforts to bring down barriers in key markets. This means strengthening the institutions and the rules that govern international trade and investment, forging relationships with new partners, and ensuring that other countries live up to their commitments.

Opening Doors to the World: Canada's International Market Access Priorities — 2000 presents significant market-opening results over the past year and outlines the Government's priorities for 2000 to further improve access to foreign markets. The Government will pursue these goals multilaterally, through the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); regionally, in such fora as the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); and bilaterally, with key partners, principally the United States, the European Union (EU), Japan and through the negotiation of a free trade agreement with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. In all cases, the Government's objective will be to ensure that Canada's traders and investors benefit fully from international trade agreements, because participation in world markets is Canada's path to prosperity.