

- (g) improvements in the institutional framework of the GATT and, in particular, improvements to the dispute settlement system which is vital to the maintenance of the integrity of the concessions negotiated in the GATT.

It is essential to begin to strengthen further the mechanisms for close consultations between federal and provincial governments and the business community. These new trade negotiations, I cannot emphasize too forcefully, will change the world trading environment through to the end of this century. As the negotiations are engaged, clearly our consultations with you will need to become much more detailed and more formalized. We are now planning the mechanisms to receive your views and pursue the necessary consultations. It is not too early for you to begin to provide us in government with a clearer idea of the trade-related barriers (non-tariff and tariff-related) affecting your export performance and which Canadian products would likely benefit from a more liberalized world trading system. In this task, I ask you to look forward – beyond the short term – to the kind of trading system you will need by the end of this decade.

In conclusion, I can assure you that there are no higher priorities for the Department of External Affairs than export development and preparation for new trade negotiations.

You have heard earlier this morning from Ray Anderson on the Department's major efforts and continuing activities to offer exports support programs and services best suited to their needs and changing conditions in the marketplace. He told you, as well, about the organizational set-up of the Department.

The uncertainties and speculations that may have prevailed recently about the possible relocation of the international trade responsibility within the government have been cleared and put to rest. The Prime Minister has decided that there shall be no move or changes in mandate or ministerial responsibility for international trade, and that all energy should now be focused on getting the job done. I can tell you that we are under very specific orders to make current arrangements within government work better in support of the business community and our trade and export interests.

I, for one, certainly intend to see that External Affairs improves and plans its full role to that end. This Department is at your service. I believe that we should be in a better position to serve you than ever before. My objective is to deliver on this and I want to hear from you in terms of both what we are doing right and how we might improve.

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