

In terms of specifics we are quite proud of the encouragement that the Canadian Assistance to Black Business in South Africa project, has provided to small, Black entrepreneurs. Since 1989, the project has provided assistance to 81 small, Black-owned companies, in various parts of South Africa but mostly in the townships, which in turn generated an estimated 1800 jobs.

Clients are provided with advice in such areas as marketing, finance, management systems, quality control and industrial management by local Black consultants. The project has exposed many in the previously largely informal, Black private sector to modern business techniques and a number of firms will be able to seek eventual partnership with foreign establishments. Later this week, I plan to visit one or two of these projects. Our government is committed to continuing with this program.

Our Canadian Exporters' Association is also planning a franchising mission to South Africa later this year. It's goal will be to seek potential franchising partners and the focus will be on small- to medium-sized businesses.

With the lifting of investment sanctions Canadian companies can now enter into joint ventures and other arrangements with their South African counterparts. Already, we have in our midst tonight representatives of one company that has taken that step. SA Express is a joint-venture initiative between Canadian and Black South African entrepreneurs to establish and operate a commuter airline service.

We as a government are continuing our substantial support programs for education and training, particularly of public administrators, economic planners and the like. We contributed to the establishment of the Macro-Economics Research Group, which was set up to address the research priorities of immediate concern during the transition to democratic government. As well, in the pre-election period, considerable effort and resources are being devoted to voter education. We recognize that as your needs change, our assistance will need to change and our future policies will reflect this.

When Mr. Nkonyeni, President of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NAFCOC) visited Canada last October, his pleas and his proposals for Black economic empowerment were reported widely in the Canadian media. Canadian investors listened with great interest. Subsequently we were particularly encouraged to learn of the initiative launched by NAFCOC in December to establish a secretariat within KPMG Aitken and Pitts for processing joint-venture enquiries from overseas. I hope that this will assist foreign investors, in particular Canadians, in identifying appropriate investment partners in South Africa among the previously disadvantaged community.