

- assistance to Canadian companies to expand in the high-end value-added sector of the Japanese market through the Action Plan for Japan;
- strategic investment and technology linkages in Europe and key Asian markets;
- direct assistance, including support of feasibility studies and venture-specific training programs provided under Renaissance Eastern Europe, to help Canadian companies establish connections with local partners in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union; and
- the use of technology transfers and joint ventures to capitalize on the emerging opportunities in the Middle East and North Africa.

V Strengthen Government-Business Partnership

Business, labour and government must all be fully engaged to build stronger trading relationships, to adopt new technologies and to encourage two-way investment.

Action

- Work closely with private sector advisory groups and industry associations on strategic planning to ensure that trade development resources are being targeted to meet the needs of Canadian business.
- Work with industry associations to develop their delivery of export education and market intelligence.
- Increase assignments of federal officials to private sector associations to strengthen linkages between the private sector and the Government's market development network.
- Promote the interchange of industry specialists to the public sector to improve the delivery of market intelligence, the identification of technology and investment opportunities, and the overall delivery of programs abroad.

VI Help Companies Improve International Marketing Capabilities

Strengthen Market Preparation and Education

Some companies, particularly those new to international business, require more training in principles and techniques of international marketing. Federal, provincial and municipal governments have important roles to play in helping Canadian companies become more prepared to pursue international business opportunities. Co-ordination at all levels is essential.

Action

- Increase the role of private sector associations in developing and delivering market preparation workshops and seminars. The new Forum for International Trade Training (FITT) program, operated by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and supported by the federal government, is an initial project to accomplish this.

- Build a strong base of export-ready companies through education programs targeted at novice exporters and small and medium-sized enterprises.
- In co-operation with the provincial governments, clarify the division of responsibility in the delivery of export education programs.

Increase Support for Strategic Alliances

Strategic alliances are a key component of international business development, particularly for the high-technology sectors. Some Canadian firms have found strategic alliances to be an excellent way to penetrate and position themselves in foreign markets, while gaining access to valuable management and marketing expertise, complementary technologies and processes, and growth capital. The Government offers a number of programs that help companies pursue strategic alliances.

Action

- Through the government's investment prospecting program, assist business, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to find investment partners that help them gain access to foreign markets, technology and capital.
- Continue to deliver strategic partnering programs through posts abroad, targeting the American, European and Asia-Pacific markets.
- Build on this partnering success in the high-technology sector to expand alliance arrangements into other priority sectors.