

make a significant contribution to the development prospects of WTO members and lead to better integration of developing countries into the world trading system. For this reason, Canada supports effective special and differential treatment for developing countries, the provision of trade-related technical assistance and capacity building, and greater institutional and policy coherence between the WTO and other international institutions. For more information on Canada and the WTO, please visit [www.international.gc.ca/tna-nac/wto-en.asp](http://www.international.gc.ca/tna-nac/wto-en.asp).

#### *WTO Agreement on Government Procurement*

Representing a market worth hundreds of billions of dollars annually, foreign government procurement holds significant potential for Canadian exporters. Consequently, Canada is working at the WTO to increase sectoral coverage and reduce discriminatory barriers in the United States and other key markets. A key mechanism in this respect is the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (AGP), which provides the basis for guaranteed access for Canadian suppliers to the United States, the European Union, Japan and other key markets. Canada continues to pursue greater and more secure market access through the AGP. Moreover, the ongoing review of the AGP, with its mandate to expand coverage, eliminate discriminatory provisions and simplify the Agreement, remains a priority. The parties to the AGP—Canada and 37 other countries—have provisionally agreed to a new text that represents an important step forward in the WTO negotiations on government procurement. Negotiations are targeted for completion in 2007.

#### *Accessions of New Members to the WTO*

With the accession of Vietnam in January 2007, the WTO now has 150 members. Canada is active in the accession negotiations of all applicants. To date, the following 29 applicants are at various stages of the accession process: Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Belarus, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Montenegro, Russia, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tonga, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Yemen.

Of the 29 applicants currently awaiting accession to the WTO, 10 are least developed countries (LDCs): Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Laos, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Sudan, Vanuatu and Yemen. Canada works with other WTO members to facilitate the accession of LDCs, recognizing that WTO accession will help them in their development efforts and their transition to fully participating members of the world trading system. Canada endorses the guidelines for facilitating and accelerating negotiations with acceding LDCs, approved by the WTO General Council in December 2002.

Further information on the WTO accession process can be obtained at [www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/acc\\_e/acc\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/acc_e/acc_e.htm).