

12 billion dollars. Bell Canada has already submitted a bid to be part of this ambitious program.

Likewise, Canada's Northern Telecom has secured several cellular telephone equipment contracts that have caused Canadian exports of telephone equipment to increase from 5 million dollars to 25 million dollars in the first six months of this year alone.

In addition to our shared commitment to develop our trading relationship, Mexico and Canada share strong geographic and economic links to the contiguous United States market.

Like Canada, Mexico's trade with the United States is essential to its economic prosperity. Mexico's two-way trade with the United States is valued at about 50 billion dollars, whereas Canada's two-way trade with the United States is about 200 billion dollars.

Given the enormous amount of trade between our three countries, it makes sense for Canada, the United States and Mexico to sit down together and pursue trilateral trade discussions to create a North American free trade market of over 350 million consumers.

By being part of a trilateral free trade discussions from the outset, we can ensure that Canadian exporters will prosper on an equal footing in the emerging North American market so that we can continue to maintain high quality jobs here in Canada.

(b) Canada must participate in these talks from the outset to enhance our ability to compete effectively and attract investment in the emerging North American market

By participating in the Mexico trade talks from the outset and developing a North American free trade market of over 350 million people, Canada will become a more attractive place in which to invest and create jobs for Canadians.

We are participating in these talks to build on the opportunities we created with the FTA.