

MAKING THE WORLD CANADA'S MARKET

Canada is highly dependent on international trade. In fact, three million Canadians and their families owe their livelihood to our ability to sell in markets outside this country. More than half of the goods and services we produce in Canada are traded internationally.

Therefore, it is only natural for Canada to be a strong advocate of trade liberalization.

In fact, Canada was one of the 23 founding members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the organization that came into being on January 1, 1948 to govern world trade.

Canada remains firmly committed to the GATT and the rules it has put in place. The GATT remains the cornerstone of Canadian trade policy, and the Free Trade Agreement negotiated with the United States is fully consistent with the spirit and letter of the GATT. In removing all tariffs, substantially reducing non-tariff barriers and extending rules to new areas of economic activity in the world's largest bilateral trading relationship, the Free Trade Agreement gives momentum to global efforts at trade liberalization.

Since 1947, seven rounds of multilateral trade negotiations have taken place under the GATT. Each has made real progress in the liberalization of world trade. The last completed round — the so-called Tokyo Round — took place between 1973 and 1979.

In September 1986, the member-nations of the GATT launched a new round of multilateral negotiations. This round, known as the Uruguay Round, is scheduled to conclude in 1990.

Even with the Uruguay Round well under way, many people are not familiar with what it is all about, nor with the GATT system itself. The purpose of this booklet is to provide Canadians with a brief background and overview of the GATT and the Uruguay Round, as well as to outline Canadian priorities in this round of negotiations.

Honourable John Crosbie
Minister for International Trade