

label known in Canada and throughout the world for the highest quality. To do this we require a never-ending, unrelenting focus on quality.

Every Canadian organization is responsible for maintaining that focus on quality, but government can play a special role in supporting this effort. To this end, I am, today, announcing three new integrated initiatives through which the government will work in partnership with the private sector to build a total commitment to quality in Canada.

First, on behalf of partners from different sectors across Canada, I am pleased to mark the creation of The Canadian Network for Total Quality (CNTQ). The founding partners of the Network include institutions across the country that focus upon the importance of quality to our competitiveness: organizations such as the Institute of Quality Assessment, the Manufacturing Technology Centre Inc. of New Brunswick, the Winnipeg Quality Network and the Quality Council of Alberta. The partners include educational institutions such as Collège Eduoard Montpetit and the Durham College of Applied Arts and Technology. They include industry organizations ranging from the Canadian Manufacturers Association to the Canadian Trucking Association. Our co-host today, the Conference Board of Canada, will also be a partner.

These partners have been helping many Canadians make total quality part of their strategies for success. They already recognize the importance of quality to our ability to compete. The Government of Canada is very pleased to have been able to act as the catalyst for bringing these partners together. As this private sector body grows to include more partners, Canadian businesses and other institutions will have access to a still more effective total quality partnership. In this way, the federal government will be working with the network to promote total quality throughout the country.

An important initial venture of the Canadian Network for Total Quality -- the second announcement of our integrated quality approach -- is the creation of a National Quality Initiative: the NQI. The first of the NQI's functions will be to facilitate the work of the CNTQ. Among other things, they will act as a conduit for the discussion and development of "best practices." The NQI will also help to ensure that Canadians have access to those with the most experience to help them in the transformation to total quality organizations. In the coming months, watch for announcements from NQI such as the creation of a national quality strategy and publication of new promotional materials. Watch for the creation of new strategic alliances and initiatives to provide training and guidance to industry and other organizations as this quality strategy is implemented.