

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a pleasure for me to be here with you today as you launch Canada's Technology Triangle Export Network. I salute the efforts of the Laurier Trade Development Centre to enhance the international competitiveness of Canadian business.

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, then my department is flattered indeed that you named your conference ExportVision '93. ExportVision is also the name of the federal government's trade development program, which is designed to help Canadian exporters gain new markets for their products and services.

This annual initiative, which is currently under way in 45 cities across the country, is a featured event of Canadian International Trade Month. Much as you are doing today, 70 trade officers from External Affairs and International Trade Canada in Ottawa and abroad are meeting face-to-face with exporters and potential exporters to discuss market opportunities. They are exchanging information, knowledge and experience -- the skills and know-how it takes to become successful exporters.

Trade has been the focus of most of my thinking and acting for the past 15 years, long before I became Minister for International Trade.

In fact, I trained in international trade for my Harvard PhD. I ran an import-export business. And I had the challenge of a lifetime when in 1986, as Minister of State for Finance, I was asked to be the Government of Canada's negotiator at the launch of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations.

Believe me, I understand what it takes to export successfully. That is why I applaud your efforts to create a network to share information and trade practical experiences. Today, I want to add to that learning curve by telling you a bit about what your federal government is doing in the fields of trade policy and export promotion for Canada.

We have vigorously pursued our trade objectives for one simple reason: exports mean jobs for Canadians. Prime Minister Campbell put it best when she said in Toronto on August 27, "The best job policy for Canada is a good trade policy."

Since becoming the Minister for International Trade five months ago, I can say with pride we have made some real achievements in securing our future as a trading nation. In Tokyo with our quadrilateral trade partners -- the U.S., Japan and the European Community -- we struck a deal on market access for industrial goods. We are now building on that deal in Geneva in order to get a bigger package.