

1992 will be a crucial year for Canadian international trade. At the multilateral level, Canada is very active in the Uruguay Round, which resumed on Monday in Geneva. These negotiations are very important for us. The fact that Canada has a relatively small domestic market has helped to make us one of the world's top trading nations. Over 25 per cent of our production is sold abroad, and one-quarter of all jobs in Canada are related to exports. Our prosperity and the prosperity of future generations of Canadians depend on our access to world markets. This is why the Geneva talks are so vitally important. An agreement would mean more equitable rules for our exporters. For example, the proposed subsidy and countervail disciplines will give Canadian exporters more certainty in the U.S. and other markets. It will fill a gap left by the FTA.

In the agricultural sector, the status quo is not acceptable. Foreseeable, effective and sustainable rules must be adopted in order to eliminate uncertainty among our agricultural producers.

We are continuing to call for a clarification of Article 11 of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), on supply management. And we are continuing to work with the provinces and with industry to obtain results that are balanced for all parts of the country, including Quebec.

The GATT draft agreement also contains reductions in duties that would be very beneficial to our export sectors. Forest products, which constitute Quebec's leading export sector, would improve their positions on international markets.

A signed agreement would also offer improved patent protection. I announced recently that we support proposals aimed at strengthening the patent protection given to pharmaceutical products. The proposals set out in the GATT draft agreement would provide holders of pharmaceutical patents with the same length of protection -- 20 years -- as that given to patent holders in other sectors.

These measures will help foster research and development in Canada, and will lead to the creation of high-paying, specialized jobs in the medical and scientific fields. They will therefore help Canada to attract new investment in the pharmaceutical industry. Such protection measures are just one of the ways in which this agreement can help Canada strengthen its position on international markets that are focusing an increasing amount of importance on research and innovation. The new proposed amendments should maintain the recent years' pace of increases in research and development investment in Quebec. In addition, the Quebec pharmaceutical industry would certainly be more competitive internationally as a result.

The Geneva negotiations also focus on service industries, which are valued at \$800 billion annually. An agreement in this sector would open up new markets for our exporters, thereby improving the positions of Quebec telecommunications, engineering, informatics and financial services companies.