

It is a great pleasure for me to be here at this luncheon today, especially as it coincides with Brazil's national day. It is equally pleasant to have the honour of sharing the podium with Mr. Galveas, the distinguished Minister of Finance of Brazil. As you know, Canada and Brazil have a long history of economic cooperation. It has been a relationship that has benefited the people of both our nations.

I would also like to say how pleased I am to be addressing such a prestigious group of bankers, financiers and investors. I would like to take this opportunity to exchange some ideas with you on international investment and multi-national corporation and how these two elements can contribute to the North-South Dialogue. I would also like to suggest to you ways in which we might formulate a set of world-wide principles which would lead to a better international investment climate and a more rapid economic growth.

I do not have to tell you that Canada and Brazil have historically been the recipients of a great deal of direct foreign investment. This investment has benefited both countries significantly and allowed them to mature more quickly than they otherwise would have.

Canada, after decades of being a net importer of direct foreign investment, has in recent years become a net exporter of direct foreign investment. As a result, Canada is in a position to fully appreciate the advantages and disadvantages of direct foreign investment and to view investment from both sides.

Those of us who have responsibilities for the management of financial and economic environments -- whether in the public or private sector -- know that striking a balance between dynamic growth and balanced economic development is essential but never easy. It is essential because economic environments play a major role in the success of any investment decision, regardless of its size or nature. These decisions affect not only the creation of wealth but often of jobs and the wellbeing of millions of people. It is not surprising, therefore, that countries have actively encouraged foreign investment.