

## MESSAGE FROM THE TCI MANAGEMENT BOARD

*The goal of the government is nothing less than making Canada a land of ever-widening opportunity. Ensuring that the benefits of the new economy touch every community and lift every family and every Canadian.*

Speech from the Throne 2002

For Team Canada Inc (TCI) and the Canadian business community it serves, 2001-02 proved to be a challenging year.

Amidst a global economic slowdown and facing profound new levels of global uncertainty emerging in the wake of 9/11, the number of new exporters did not grow and Canadian exports declined 2.1 percent in 2001– the first drop in absolute numbers in years. The decline proved to be less dramatic than elsewhere, however, as Canada posted a relatively strong overall economic performance of 1.5 percent GDP growth, similar to OECD-Europe's 1.3 percent growth.

Canada's 4.3 percent share of world exports was unchanged in 2001. However, Canada's ranking among the world's top exporters slipped from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> place.

Not surprisingly, concerns about Canada-U.S. border security dominated our trade agenda in the aftermath of 9/11. Finding the right balance between public security and the free movement of goods and people across the Canada-U.S. border was, and continues to be, a top priority. The stakes are high. At risk is \$1.86 billion in daily two-way trade, as well as our ability to attract foreign investment on the merits of our proximity and preferred access to U.S. markets. Workable solutions require cooperation with international partners, across federal departments and agencies, with the provinces and territories, and with Canadian business.



TCI is certainly no stranger to the merits of coordinated action. Since its launch five years ago, TCI has sought to improve trade services by building a strong, integrated network of stakeholders committed to helping Canadian businesses succeed in global markets. In doing so, TCI has unleashed previously untapped synergies between its members and partners, and yielded encouraging results. Focusing efforts where most needed – on Canada's knowledge-based, value added, job-rich sectors that offer the most for continuing prosperity – TCI has helped thousands of Canadian businesses recognize the benefits of going global, and equipped thousands more with the skills and tools they need to succeed. By helping Canadian companies take full advantage of international business opportunities, even in the face of heightened security concerns, TCI contributed to Canada's strong export performance throughout 2001-02.