

gives them an outlet for growth that no government-led industrial strategy could provide."

The North American Free Trade Agreement builds on the FTA by expanding our access to some U.S. markets, improving the dispute settlement process, and, of course, opening up the fast-growing Mexican market.

As exporters, I'm sure you appreciate the logic of signing a deal that gives us roughly the same kind of access south of the Rio Grande that Mexico enjoys in our market. It's just a question of righting the scales -- correcting a situation in which 80 percent of our exports are blocked by Mexican barriers, while 80 percent of their exports to Canada enter duty-free. We believe that by expanding our access to, and involvement in, the Mexican market, Canadian business will focus more clearly on Latin America as a whole.

To help explore the opportunities that exist for Canada in the region, Prime Minister Campbell also announced on August 27 that she will establish a Blue Ribbon Commission, made up of leaders from the business, academic and labour sectors, to report within six months on how Canadian business -- and Canadian jobs -- can be generated throughout the region.

As we head into the final stretch of GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade] negotiations in Geneva, we're looking at further openings in world markets, coupled with a strengthened set of trade rules.

With one quarter of our production exported, Canada needs a big, balanced result from the GATT negotiations. And, personally, I will continue to do all in my power to see that we succeed.

I have certainly been encouraged by the progress that's taken place since May, when Canada brought together trade ministers from the U.S., Japan, and the EC -- our Quad partners -- to restart the market access negotiations. This initiative, which led to the Tokyo interim market access agreement in July, effectively put the multilateral trade talks back on track.

With the GATT and the NAFTA, we will have a mutually reinforcing, outward-looking package of trade agreements. In the hands of people like you and our winners tonight, they will serve Canada well.

When Kim Campbell spoke in Toronto on August 27 she ventured even further, to propose closer trade relations with the most dynamic area in the world today -- the Asia-Pacific economic community. She will vigorously pursue that idea in November, at the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation forum in Seattle.