

MEXICAN TELECOM COMPANY TO EXPAND: Major Opportunities for Canadian Suppliers

Telefonos de Mexico (TELMEX), the recently privatized national telephone company in Mexico, has made public its plans to invest US\$ 7.2 billion over the next three years to accelerate the modernization of Mexico's telecommunications network.

Approximately 35 per cent of the planned investment will be in the form of procurement of equipment and specialized services from foreign sources of supply, with financing sought from banks and/or government financing agencies.

The major objectives of the investment program include:

- installation of 2.3 million new telephone lines, 100,000 new public telephones and procurement/construction of 13,600 km of fibre optic networks;
- extension of cellular services to an additional 50 cities and towns in Mexico, thereby expanding services by over 200,000 customers;
- provision of rural telephone service to 8,000 new communities;

- replacement of 470,000 non-digital telephone centrals with digital equipment.
- The opening of 33 new digital centres with 1,400 computerized operator positions.

TELMEX will also create a new "Instituto Nacional de Capacitacion e Investigacion Telefonica," with 13 training centres across the country to improve the technical skills of over 125,000 company employees. France Telecom and Southwest Bell of the USA, the new partners of TELMEX, will participate in this program.

Canada has a long tradition as a supplier of telephone equipment and services to the Mexican market. Canadian firms active in cellular telephone, rural systems, switching products and training services are already well represented in the market. Exports of telecom products to Mexico exceeded \$25 million in 1990, up over 100 per cent from the previous year.

External Affairs and International Trade Canada (EAITC) is organizing a mission of Canadian exporters to the COMEXPO telecommunications exhibition, which takes place in Guadalajara, Mexico from September 3 to 5. For further information on COMEXPO contact Paul Schutte, Caribbean and Central America Trade Development Division - Fairs and Missions (LCTF), EAITC, 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa K1A 0G2. Fax: (613) 996-0677. Tel.: (613) 996-5358.

For further information on Mexico's telecommunications opportunities, contact Gil Rishchynski, South America and Mexico Trade Division (LST), EAITC, 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa K1A 0G2. Tel.: (613) 996-8625. Fax: (613) 996-0677.

To obtain a copy of the *Market Study on Telecommunications Equipment and Systems in Mexico* (#30LE), contact Info Export (see box at the bottom of page 12).

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tional Development Agency (CIDA), through its bilateral development assistance and indus-

trial cooperation programs, has also featured prominently in Canada's success in this market.

A number of key projects and joint ventures has been supported under these programs.

Now is the time for Canadian companies to visit Colombia and generate commercial ties.

For more information on trade opportunities in Colombia or on the implications of various reforms, contact Georges Lemieux, South America and Mexico Trade Development Division (LST), External Affairs and International Trade Canada, 125 Sussex Drive, Ottawa K1A 0G2. Tel.: (613) 996-5548. Fax: (613) 996-0677.

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