

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE



I am pleased to present the year 2000 edition of *Opening Doors to the World: Canada's International Market Access Priorities* and to report on the continuing success that Canada is enjoying in the international marketplace. Last year's edition noted that Canadian exports of goods and services had reached a record level in 1998 for the seventh year in a row. I am delighted to report that the trend has continued in 1999, with the new record at \$410 billion, an increase of 11.3 percent over last year. It is important for the Canadian economy and for generating jobs in Canada that we continue to build on this success in the years ahead.

Trade is important to every Canadian. From the self-employed entrepreneur to the factory worker, from small business owner to corporate executive and from child to pensioner, we as Canadians all have a stake in ensuring that products and services flow smoothly over international borders. Most importantly, we rely on clear and predictable rules to govern this trade.

The greatest tool that Canada has to make such rules, and to open new markets for our goods and services, is the World Trade Organization (WTO). I was pleased to have led Canada's delegation to the Ministerial Meeting in Seattle last December, although I regret that we were not able to launch new broad-based negotiations at that time. The fact remains, however, that the WTO is one of the world's most important economic institutions. The WTO enjoys the support of governments around the world and is responsible for the progressive expansion of the global economy. It is an organization that continues to grow and to attract new members, including lesser-developed countries. The burgeoning membership of the WTO is testimony to the universal importance to all countries of a multilateral rules-based system.