

government procurement for service providers across North America.

Yet, even before the agreement comes into effect, Mexico has recognized the world-class abilities that Canada offers in telecommunications, information technologies, financial services and energy services, to name a few.

You recognized that capacity when a leading Mexican computer systems management company created a joint venture with SHL Systemhouse Incorporated of Ottawa last summer. Their joint venture has won a \$500-million contract to build and manage information systems for your finance ministry.

Another success story: in August, SNC Lavalin International Incorporated of Montreal was awarded a \$20-million contract to modernize Mexico's surveying and mapping information system. The new system will involve a unique, integrated, digital mapping system developed by Energy, Mines and Resources Canada.

Other sectors, such as the Canadian trucking industry, are just as keen to establish partnerships with Mexican carriers in anticipation of the increased trade that the NAFTA will bring.

Joint efforts, such as those I have outlined today in the environmental and services sectors, are bringing Mexico and Canada closer than ever before. By working, investing and trading together, we can help secure a sound and prosperous environment across North America for our children. We can also create a more level playing field for business and investment. Free and fair trade means playing by the same rules. That is what a partnership is all about.

With the NAFTA, Canada, the United States and Mexico are forming a new partnership. It is a partnership for trade. It is a partnership for economic development. It is a partnership for progress. It is a partnership that can contribute to a new era of economic prosperity, not just in our three countries, but potentially throughout the Americas.

We are privileged today to have the tremendous opportunity to forge this new partnership. It has taken courage and imagination to create it. We must be determined to make it work.