

Minister for International Trade



Ministre du Commerce International

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0G2

I am pleased to table the second annual Report to Parliament on the achievements of Canada's International Business Development program. International Business Development (IBD) makes an important contribution to economic growth and job creation in Canada. In fact, one in every three jobs in Canada depends on sales made outside the country.

In 1997, Canada's exports increased 7.4% to a record level of \$343 billion. Fully 40% of Canada's gross domestic product is trade-related, the highest proportion in the G-7. This vigorous export growth means more jobs for more Canadians.

The centrepiece of the IBD program is the newly created Team Canada Inc network of service providers led by the three federal IBD departments: Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Industry Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. These core departments have joined forces to provide enhanced programs and services to the Canadian business community.

Integral to the program are the 125 Canadian diplomatic outposts around the world. Trade commissioners at these missions met with over 12 000 visitors in 1997, many of whom received assistance to break into new markets.

When the assistance required involves risk and financial management services, the Export Development Corporation (EDC) is available to help Canadians compete in the global arena. In 1997, EDC served more than 3700 customers and had business volume of \$28.6 billion.

Performance measurement is an area of special attention. The Trade Commissioner Service is seeking feedback from the business community on various IBD programs and services to determine how we can best meet the needs of Canadian firms that wish to venture abroad.

Canada continues to pursue its trade liberalization agenda — opening doors for more Canadian companies in foreign markets. We also continue to promote this country as an attractive site for foreign investors. A comparative study that compared Canada with the United States and five major European countries, done by the accounting firm KPMG in 1997, found that Canada is the most cost effective location to set up a new business.

We are showing solid results for our IBD endeavours. Working together in the Team Canada Inc partnership will lead to even greater success at home and abroad.

Sergio Marchi
Minister for International Trade

