

TO DO THAT, IT IS CLEAR THAT A KEY PRIORITY MUST BE THE EXPANSION AND DIVERSIFICATION OF OUR EXPORT TRADE. SO, I SEE MY PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES AS CLOSELY LINKED TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF OUR NATIONAL GOALS.

THAT IS WHY I'M PLEASED TO BE HERE TODAY, TO LAUNCH CANADA EXPORT TRADE MONTH - A PROGRAM OF EVENTS WHICH HIGHLIGHT VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF OUR EXPORT ACTIVITIES.

EXPORT TRADE MONTH IS A COLLABORATION, INVOLVING BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, LABOUR UNIONS, INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS PEOPLE, EDUCATORS AND THOSE CONCERNED WITH TRADE IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS. THIS COOPERATION IS EVIDENCE OF THE GROWING CONSENSUS IN CANADA THAT OUR FUTURE PROSPERITY IS DEPENDENT UPON IMPROVING OUR EXPORT PERFORMANCE. THE THRUST OF THE EXPORT TRADE MONTH PROGRAM RELATES DIRECTLY TO THESE OBJECTIVES.

FIRST, WE ARE ATTEMPTING TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ACROSS THE COUNTRY OF THE CRITICAL ROLE PLAYED BY EXPORT TRADE IN OUR NATIONAL ECONOMY. SOMETHING LIKE THREE MILLION CANADIAN JOBS DEPEND ON EXPORT ACTIVITY. OUR MESSAGE IS THAT THERE IS A DIRECT ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXPORT ACTIVITY AND ECONOMIC HEALTH. WE WANT THAT RELATIONSHIP TO BE BETTER UNDERSTOOD BY EVERY CANADIAN.

WE ARE ALSO COMMUNICATING WITH THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY, IN PARTICULAR, THE SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES WHICH PROVIDE THE MAJORITY OF JOBS IN CANADA, TO MAKE THEM AWARE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES WHICH EXIST IN THE INTERNATIONAL MARKETPLACE.