

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have asked you here today to officially launch Canada's Export Trade Month with my colleagues Messrs. Jim Taylor of the Canadian Exporters Association and Roger Hamel of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and to announce the World Market Trade Development Program.

Creating more jobs for Canadians by strengthening Canada's strategic trading position and upgrading our export performance is a key priority on this government's agenda. In 1985, the Prime Minister publicly committed the Government to work towards a Trade Strategy for Canada, and this was endorsed by the First Ministers.

The three main objectives are: improved trade competitiveness, strengthened access to foreign markets, and more effective international marketing. This Trade Strategy laid the foundation of our two-track approach: the Free Trade Agreement and active participation in a new round of multilateral trade negotiations.

Export trade helps generate over a third of Canada's annual Gross Domestic Product. In 1987, Canada exported products and services valued at \$144 billion, to the benefit of all regions.

More than 75% of these goods went to the United States. We have, as you know, taken a crucial step to secure and enhance that vital segment of our trade with the conclusion of the Canada - U.S. Free Trade Agreement. It is an example to the world of the mutual benefits that can be derived from trade liberalization. The FTA is a great accomplishment and we are striving to ensure that it is complemented through a successful outcome of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

To focus national attention on the critical importance of export trade to the overall health of the Canadian economy, and to highlight some of the major trends in the international marketplace, October has been designated Canada Export Trade Month since 1983.

Its specific objectives are threefold: (1) to heighten awareness of the opportunities and benefits of international trade; (2) to give public recognition to companies that have excelled in exporting; and (3) to familiarize new exporters and export-ready companies with comprehensive programs and services to help them develop and realize their export potential.

.../2