

- reviewing the possibility of using the information reported on corporate income tax returns to fulfil the annual filing requirements under the Canada Business Corporations Act; and
- consulting with small business on the feasibility of simplifying the T4 slip and reducing the frequency of payroll remittances for small employers.

The joint forum also sponsored a study that set a baseline measure of the information burden on small business and issued the President's annual report on first year progress. The government will continue to address irritants identified by small business, monitor progress in a follow-up measurement of the burden, implement permanent measures to minimize burden in future and improve communications with the small business community. Progress has been made in improving the efficiency of regulation in six specific sectors - biotechnology, health, mining, automotive, forest products and aquaculture - some thirty regulatory improvements will have been made by spring 1997. Action plans have been developed to improve three more key areas -- pesticides, tax simplification and student visas -- by 1997. These improvements demonstrate that Canada has a stable and rational regulatory framework which the government is continuously seeking to improve with the input of business.

(f) the impact on Canadian firms of the harmonization of international/technical standards on their ability to compete internationally and to establish themselves abroad. (page 56)

This was already answered in response to recommendation 16. The impact of harmonized standards has already been reviewed numerous times and the government has been and is moving to use, as much as is appropriate, international standards in order to facilitate access to international markets and avoid placing unnecessary cost on Canadian firms through differing standards and conformity assessment procedures.

23. To ensure that the conclusions and recommendations of the task force are publicly available, the Committee recommends that the task force report to Parliament. (page 57)

The SAGITs committees report directly to the Minister of International Trade, who in turn is responsible to Cabinet and Parliament.

24. The Committee recommends:

- (a) That, in the current context of globalization, Canada continue to exercise leadership to promote respect for human rights, the basic rights and interests of workers and global environmental standards; and**
- (b) That the government associates itself with the private sector in the development of a voluntary code of conduct covering commercial activities occurring outside of Canada, so that such activities will reflect and promote Canadian values. (page 59)**

The increasing globalization of business activity presents a shared challenge as well as a shared responsibility for governments, businesses and labour representatives at the national and international level. The challenge is to build such a partnership; the responsibility is to use such a persuasive coalition to ensure a coordinated and coherent approach to the development of good domestic and global business practices that promote and protect basic workers' rights and standards. The government is fully committed to this agenda, including encouraging and supporting the efforts of the private sector to develop good business practices which reflect the high priority this government attaches to enhancing the human rights of workers.