

I think these are challenges that all of us in North America share. In Canada, we are beginning to tackle many of our obstacles to competitiveness - in some areas, through increasing collaboration among governments, and between the public and private sectors - in other ways, by getting out of the way of private initiative.

Canada will continue on the path of restructuring in both sectors. We have little choice if we are to keep up with the best in the world. And they aren't just in Japan, Europe, or the Asia-Pacific Region. Frequently, the best in the world are found right here in North America.

For us, remaining competitive in a global marketplace is not simply a fond wish; it is a requirement for survival, and most Canadians recognize this. And that is why I am confident that Canada will continue to work for increasingly open-market access in all markets of the world. That is why we will make the investments that we need to keep our skills up to date. That is why we will make sure that Canadian firms have the technology and the know-how to keep up with the United States' best and the best from the rest of the world.

Thank you.