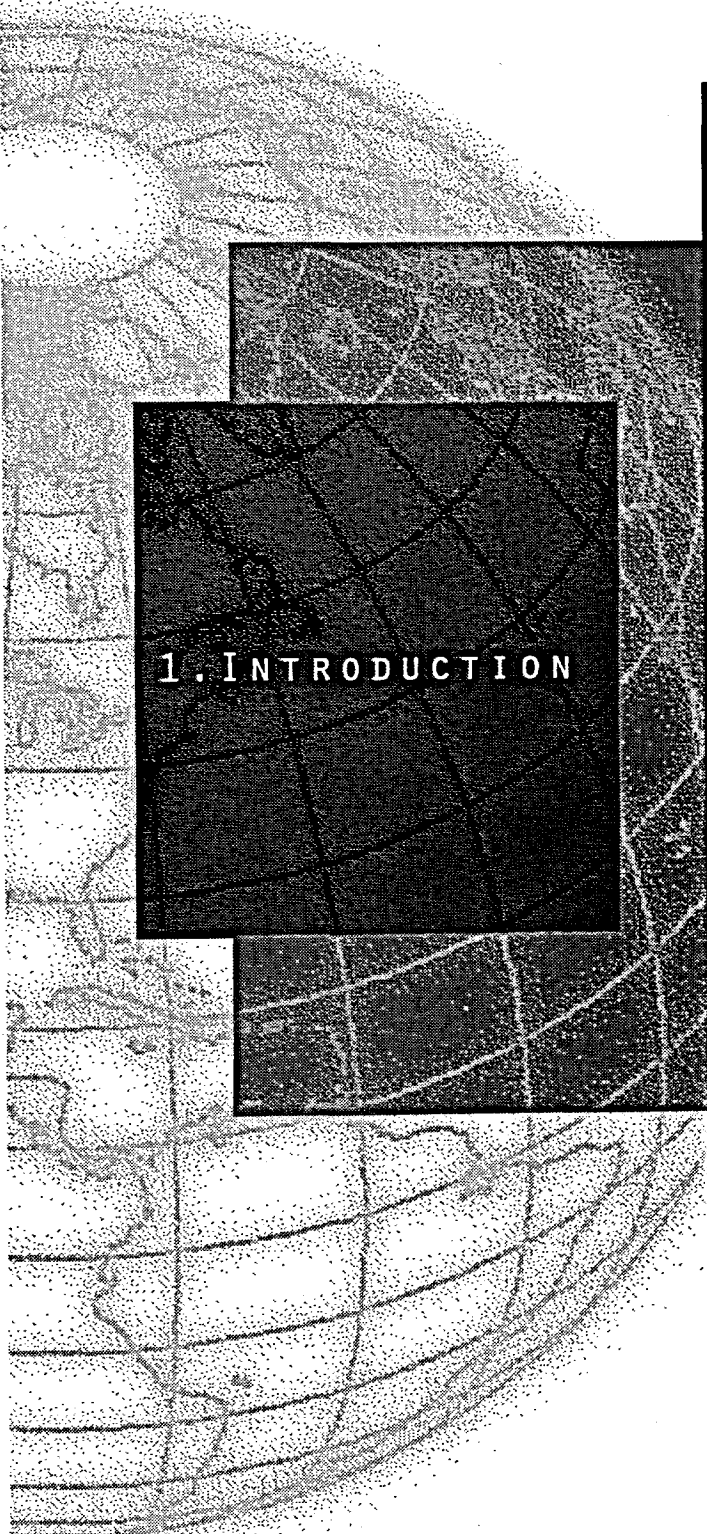




1. INTRODUCTION

Trade is important to the prosperity and well-being of Canadians. One in three Canadian jobs depends on trade with the rest of the world, and every \$1 billion in new exports creates an estimated 6000 to 8000 new jobs¹ in Canada.

Although Canadians have been successful in selling to the world, our ability to fully exploit opportunities in key markets is often limited by a variety of barriers. To ensure secure and predictable access to the world for Canadian traders and investors, the government will continue its efforts to bring down barriers in key markets. This means strengthening the institutions and the rules that govern international trade and investment, forging relationships with new partners, and ensuring that other countries live up to their commitments.

Opening Doors to the World: Canada's International Market Access Priorities, 1998 presents significant market-opening results over the past year and outlines the government's priorities for 1998 to further improve access to foreign markets. The government will pursue these goals multilaterally, through the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); regionally, in forums such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum and the nascent Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA); and bilaterally, with key partners, principally the United States, the European Union and Japan. In all cases, the government's objective will be to ensure that Canada's traders and investors benefit fully from international trade agreements, because trade with the world means jobs at home — good jobs, jobs that last.

CANADA: A TRADING NATION

Merchandise Trade Growing Rapidly

Canada depends more on trade than any other major industrialized nation. Over the past 20 years, from 1977 to 1997, Canada's merchandise exports to the world have grown from \$45.6 billion to \$301.3² billion (see Figure 1).

¹This "export-job multiplier" is based on analysis carried out by the federal government in 1997.

²1997 merchandise trade figures appearing throughout this document are preliminary figures released by Statistics Canada, February 19, 1998. Unless otherwise specified, all values are in Canadian dollars.