

## **Canada's Overall Trade Agenda (recommendations 5, 7, and 43)**

Canada is no stranger to international trade. Fully 40% of our economy relies on the cross-border exchange of goods and services. An effective rules-based multilateral trading system, therefore, is of profound importance to securing the economic and social well-being of Canadians.

Canada benefits greatly from reduced trade barriers and improved rules achieved through multilateral negotiations. With so much of our economy tied to world markets, secure access is a vital concern. Such access gives Canadian businesses confidence to invest in the plants, equipment, and research and development needed to service those markets.

Canadians understand the importance of international trade to their daily lives. Trade enables schools to be built, local businesses to grow, and jobs to be created. At the same time as trade improves our communities, it also reminds us of our need to compete, to innovate, and to pursue excellence.

With one of the most open economies in the world, we approach the new negotiations from a position of strength and assurance. Our economy has few areas of significant protection, and our products already meet or exceed most international standards. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA), and subsequently the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), have provided the impetus to make the structural adjustments required to compete in the global economy. As a result, the Canadian economy is growing and creating jobs at a pace not seen for decades; it is exporting at unprecedented levels; and Canadian businesses are more attuned to opportunities abroad.