



# The Business Mission Comes of Age. Or

*When the cover of the January 2000 edition of TCS International displayed the bold headline "Hot Off the Press," the Business Mission Agreement (BMA) began its role as the primary tool for the coordination of overseas business and science and technology missions.*

*Now, following more than a year of promotion, application and dialogue, the time is ripe to ask:*

### Has the BMA lived up to its role?

To answer this question, we asked four people who have used the BMA to share their experiences with us.

Tunis-TD Program Manager **Russell Merifield** experienced the BMA first-hand during a province of Quebec business mission to Tunisia (and other posts) in the summer of 2000: "The Business Mission Agreement, in this case, was very helpful. Each party clearly understood its responsibilities, and our collaboration was made much easier."

In October 2000, the BMA was used by Industry Canada (IC) in the coordination of a Telecom trade mission to the Middle East. Drawing on practical experience with the BMA, **Ohannes Keuylian** of IC said: "The BMA is a good idea and is good to identify common items such as transportation, receptions, etc.

The deadlines are good for planning, but they should be made more flexible, especially when dealing with the private sector."

**Cheryl Lockhart** of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), was also busy in October 2000 as the mission organizer for an AAFC business mission to Iran.

"Overall, the BMA is a great policy [tool] and was very useful in establishing common objectives, which made for a very effective mission."

**Roger Belanger**, Deputy Director (Middle East Division, GMR): "From a Geographic Bureau perspective, the introduction of the BMA has meant that posts' scarce resources could be devoted to the mission's

### Raising BMA Awareness - Delivering the Message -

**The Post Support Unit (PSU) is spearheading a drive to make the BMA a key management tool for posts and partner-clients. Over the past six months, the PSU has provided core service training and briefing sessions to many members of the Team Canada Inc network, including CIDA, AAFC, the National Research Council's Industrial Research Assistance Program, Industry Canada, and the Export Development Corporation. The PSU will continue to provide cross-Canada awareness training to partner clients.**