

companies, to date 770 have been privatized, merged or liquidated, with another 165 in process. That leaves only 120 state-owned firms in Mexico. More importantly, this has helped improve the Mexican economy's overall productivity and the public finances. In the financial sector, the most important step undertaken by Mexico has been the reprivatization of the commercial banks.

Now, I referred earlier to what I called a number of warning signals for Canadian competitiveness that have been showing up lately on our radar screen, and I said that our government is working to meet them head on.

I and a number of other Ministers are currently in the process of elaborating a policy and public consultation strategy designed to address in a comprehensive way such basic underpinnings of Canadian competitiveness as skills training, science and technology, capital and investment, and an issue that I'd like to say a short word about now, and that is the nature of the internal Canadian economic union, the internal Canadian market, and the role these issues play in the current national debate on constitutional reform.

According to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, some 500 internal barriers to interprovincial trade within Canada are costing Canadians \$6 billion a year. They are hurting our internal and external competitiveness. Canada needs a true common market, and a stronger economic union, for the prosperity of all Canadians.

As part of the Constitutional Proposals Prime Minister Mulroney presented three weeks ago, we have included fundamental reforms to the Canadian economic union.

Canadians are modernizing a Constitution which was written with the economic realities of the mid-19th century in mind. It could not have anticipated the rapid changes brought on by the creation of a global marketplace.

The government is proposing a series of amendments -- for public discussion -- which will enhance the mobility of people, goods, services and capital within Canada with a view to strengthening our economic union.

In an era of growing international business linkages, Canada simply has too many barriers to trade within the country. Our ability to compete in global markets is hindered by antiquated restrictions to the free functioning of our internal market. So, we propose that by 1995, the Constitution be modernized to enhance the mobility of persons, capital, services and goods within Canada.