

Dubien, Deric -EAI

From: Bastien, Louise -EBC on behalf of EXTOTT (CONSULT)
Sent: February 8, 2001 9:19 AM
To: Hey, Sabine -EBC; Dubien, Deric -EAI
Subject: TR: Response to Minister Pettigrew's letter

—Message d'origine—

De: Sydor, Seona [mailto:SSydor@mdsintl.com]
Date: 7 février, 2001 09:47
A: 'consultations@dfait-maeci.gc.ca'
Cc: Harling, Brian
Objet: Response to Minister Pettigrew's letter

Trade Policy Planning Division (EAI)/Central America
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
125 Sussex Drive
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February 6th, 2001
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Via email -

Minister Pettigrew:

This is in response to your letter dated January 15th, 2001, concerning a free trade agreement between Canada and Central American countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

I respond to your letter both as Chair of the Medical and Health Care Products and Services SAGIT, and as Vice President, Corporate Affairs, MDS Inc. The SAGIT is in support of Free Trade Agreements, with the exception of one member of SAGIT who represents labour. While Central America is not a major customer for Canadian companies in this sector, we do support the principle of expanded trade relations.

The tariff component of free trade agreements is not, however, the major issue in this sector. Getting your product approved for distribution in a jurisdiction is more of a trade barrier than tariffs. We would recommend improved standardization as part of the negotiations, and even harmonization of regulatory issues and procedures around product approvals. At the next SAGIT Meeting - likely in April or May of this year - I will add this item to the agenda, and ask SAGIT members to provide specific examples of regulatory, procedural and standardization issues associated with these countries that we would encourage your negotiators to resolve as part of the negotiations.

MDS Inc is a Canadian owned and Canadian based global company with operations in 19 other countries on five continents. We provide products and services in over 80 countries. MDS revenues in fiscal 2000 were \$1.44 billion of which 61% was from international activity. This was accomplished with an employee base of 11,000 employees, 69% of which are located in Canada.

Ensuring that Canadian companies in the Health and Life Sciences sector have a level playing field is very important to MDS. We encourage you and your Ministry to continue to further your efforts to expand the opportunities for Canadians to compete on an equal basis globally.

Yours truly

Brian Harling