

BUT HAVING QUALITY GOODS AND SERVICES FOR EXPORT AT COMPETITIVE PRICES IS NOT ENOUGH UNLESS EXPORT MARKETS ARE OPEN. FOR OVER FORTY YEARS CANADA HAS BEEN A LEADER IN LIBERALIZING THE WORLD TRADING SYSTEM AND IN REDUCING BARRIERS TO TRADE.

ON SEPTEMBER 26, THE PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED THAT CANADA WOULD EXPLORE WITH THE UNITED STATES THE SCOPE AND PROSPECTS FOR A NEW, BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENT. THIS DECISION IS PART OF THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERALL STRATEGY FOR ECONOMIC RENEWAL. IT WAS TAKEN IN PARALLEL WITH A COMMITMENT TO CONTINUE TO WORK ACTIVELY TO ENCOURAGE THE WORLD'S MAJOR TRADING NATIONS TO BEGIN ANOTHER ROUND OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS.

THIS DECISION RESULTED FROM INTENSIVE DISCUSSION WITH THE PROVINCES AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR ON CANADA'S TRADE OPTIONS. THE MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNDERTOOK PUBLIC HEARINGS IN FIFTEEN CITIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THE PRIVATE SECTOR, LABOUR, ACADEMIA, THE CULTURAL COMMUNITY AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES HAVE ALL BEEN INVOLVED. THIS HAS BEEN THE MOST THOROUGH SET OF TRADE CONSULTATIONS THIS COUNTRY HAS EVER SEEN.