

The success of Mexican efforts to restructure and open the economy is reflected in the continued growth of your exports to Canada, as well as a shift in type of exports. In 1983, close to 85% of these exports were oil or oil products. Last year, this was less than 3%.

Indeed, shipments of Mexican manufactured products now represent more than 60% of Mexican exports to Canada. Mexican companies are exporting valves and related equipment to the Canadian oil and gas industry. Television sets, radios, computers, air conditioning systems are all important Mexican exports to Canada.

Also, you are a significant and growing source of fruit and vegetables in a market that badly needs these products during the long, cold winter months. Another important element of this trade is the fact that more and more Mexican agricultural products are moving directly between Mexican and Canadian brokers. Triangulation of this trade has long been an irritant and we are obviously working in the right direction, for our mutual benefit and profit.

With respect to major Canadian exports to Mexico, Canada is an important supplier to Mexico of food and agricultural products, including skim milk powder and canola. Our cattle breeders are working with yours to upgrade the quality and productivity of Mexican dairy and beef herds.

We must not forget that we exchange close to 750 million dollars of automotive parts and components of which 650 million dollars comes from Mexico.

Mexico is Canada's most important trading partner in Latin America, and we are committed to do all we can to ensure an expansion of two way trade.

Our work as governments to enhance economic and trade relations between our countries is intended to produce an environment in which you, the private sector, can seek to work more actively in the pursuit of market opportunities in Mexico and Canada.

I look forward to continuing the exchanges that we have embarked upon. In this regard, I have invited Secretary Serra to visit Canada at the earliest opportunity and with a group of Mexican executives. He has accepted the invitation and will advise as to the dates of his visit.

As Prime Minister Mulroney stated during his visit, Canada is committed to building a better and stronger partnership with your country.

We have long been friends and neighbours. Let us now become partners in progress to our mutual benefit.