

Canadian services providers have benefited greatly from the commitments obtained from other countries in the last round of GATS, and there are opportunities for them to benefit further from increased trade liberalization in the current GATS negotiations. Canada, as a trading nation, is interested in developing open and more secure conditions for international trade in services. In the GATS negotiations, we will continue to pursue additional commitments on temporary entry and increased transparency of commitments to improve and secure access for Canadian services providers.

INVESTMENT

At Doha, ministers recognized the importance of a framework to secure transparent, stable and predictable conditions for foreign direct investment, and agreed to launch investment negotiations after the next WTO Ministerial conditional upon an agreement on negotiating modalities. Canada believes that for host countries, a framework that enables the cross-border flow of investment would facilitate technology transfer and contribute to economic growth and development. Investors would benefit from the certainty provided by enhanced rules on transparency and non-discrimination. Canada therefore supports the launch of negotiations on a multilateral investment framework at the 2003 WTO Ministerial in Cancun.

COMPETITION POLICY

Canada supports the establishment of a multilateral framework on competition policy, and is actively working toward the launch of negotiations at the Cancun Ministerial. Canada believes that a framework for competition policy will ensure that the gains from trade and investment liberalization are not undermined by the anti-competitive behaviour of private actors. By establishing a coherent set of principles for sound competition policy among all members, a multilateral agreement would ensure a competitive environment and a more transparent and predictable climate to encourage foreign trade and investment. An agreement would also contribute to the important objective of building institutional capacity in developing countries.

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

Canada considers that transparency in government procurement is ready to move to negotiations. At Doha, WTO ministers addressed a key concern of developing countries, by establishing that a transparency agreement would not restrict the scope of countries to use domestic preferences in their procurement. Canada's current transparency practices are compatible with the elements under discussion at the WTO. Such an agreement would benefit exporters of goods and services seeking opportunities to sell to governments or to sub-contract to domestic suppliers. As well, an agreement would benefit member countries by increasing the value received for their procurement expenditures, improving the governance infrastructure and reducing the possibility of corruption.

GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT

To take advantage of the significant potential for international trade represented by the hundreds of billions of dollars spent annually on government procurement worldwide, Canada has pursued market access in the World Trade Organization. Increased sectoral coverage and a reduction of discriminatory barriers in the United States and other key markets would create significant opportunities for Canadian exporters. To increase opportunities, Canada supports a range of activities to broaden and strengthen government procurement disciplines and ensure effective implementation of existing commitments.

Canada, along with 27 other countries, is party to the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (AGP). The AGP provides the basis for guaranteed access for Canadian suppliers to the United States, the European Union, Japan and other key markets. Canada continues to pursue greater and more secure market access through the AGP. A review of the AGP, with a mandate to expand coverage, eliminate discriminatory provisions and simplify the agreement remains a priority. Work is continuing, with input from the provinces and other stakeholders, to establish Canada's priorities for further market access.