

desire to emphasize the openness and outward-looking nature of APEC.

In fact, APEC trade ministers will meet next summer to explore how we can infuse APEC's momentum into the rest of the world trading system. But I don't want to leave you with the impression that APEC is just about government officials and ministers meeting in far-off places. That is not at all the case. In the end, APEC is for business and about business - both in the shorter term and the longer term.

In the longer term, tariffs will be lower and markets that were once the exclusive domain of indigenous companies will be open to Canadian companies. But in the shorter term, APEC members are working on other types of business facilitation. Leaders agreed that, collectively, the member economies need to cut down on the paperwork for business people. They also endorsed the work of the APEC Customs Procedures Group to harmonize and simplify customs in the region by 1998 and to eliminate some of the most irritating customs problems in the area. Business people travelling in Asia-Pacific might be able to get their visas for short-term business trips more quickly. In this regard, the Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Keating, advanced an interesting proposal at Osaka. He suggested the development of an APEC business travel card to facilitate immigration and customs procedures for business people in the region. We supported the idea and will work with the Australians to develop the details.

A computer network will be built that will allow businesses to look up tariff rates, information on non-tariff barriers, and so on. Many APEC markets are viewed as opaque. APEC's efforts to gather and make available information on investment regimes, government procurement, intellectual property and competition policy practice can only be helpful to those seeking to enter new markets.

Canada values and encourages the input of the Canadian private sector at all levels of APEC activity, especially in the 10 working groups and symposiums, where useful technical exchanges and new relationships can result. Although APEC's 10 sectoral working groups were not present in Osaka, they do meet throughout the year to look at and provide advice on specific trade and investment issues. These working groups often directly involve business participants or advisors. These groups cover: fisheries; human resources development; industrial science and technology, resources conservation, energy co-operation; telecommunications; trade and investment data; trade promotion; transportation; and tourism. In addition, there are ad hoc experts' groups covering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and agricultural technology. These working groups contribute towards economic and technical development, for example, through technology transfer and solutions for regional economic infrastructure.