



Canada's efforts in developing these alliances have been well received by countries with a similar commitment to trade liberalization in the hemisphere. Many of our trade partners in the region have also been very active in the deepening and broadening of existing economic integration mechanisms, as well as in negotiating new agreements. Countries of the Andean Community and of the Central American Common Market, for example, have committed to strengthening their internal ties to consolidate their respective common markets. Mexico and Chile have developed a network of regional agreements that now cover a significant proportion of their trade within the hemisphere.

The recent granting by the United States Congress of Trade Promotion Authority will reinforce the U.S. Administration's capacity to demonstrate real leadership in trade negotiations and to get more involved in trade liberalization initiatives in the hemisphere. The U.S. Administration is now in a position to conclude its current negotiations with Chile and Singapore. United States Trade Representative Robert Zoellick stated in a recent interview that the Administration would also begin work on a series of other trade agreements, including, among others, a regional deal with five Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua).

It must be noted, however, that the recent protectionist actions by the United States, such as the U.S. Farm Bill signed into law in May, have generated some negative sentiments and created concerns regarding the commitment of the United States to free trade. Such policies could have the potential to alienate countries in the hemisphere and create an unfair playing field, thus slowing down the FTAA negotiations.

The alliances that Canada has created with other hemispheric partners, as well as our experience in negotiating the CUSFTA and NAFTA, put us in a unique position to lead the hemisphere in its efforts toward further trade liberalization and to dissuade other countries from resorting to protectionist measures that work against economic integration.

TRANSPARENCY AND CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION

Recommendation 3

"That, Canada take on a "champion" role regarding the FTAA, mobilizing political, civil society and business support to achieve a hemispheric free trade agreement by 2005." and

Recommendation 18

"That, in order to further enhance transparency of free trade negotiations as well as civil society participation, the Government of Canada actively encourage governments within the Americas to consult widely with their populations and civil society during the FTAA

