

STATEMENTS

Despite our basic commitment to put into place a rules-based international trading system, little will result from our efforts unless companies seize the initiative to capitalize on falling trade barriers. We must pull together our collective talents and resources to exploit fully the trade and investment opportunities offered by the buoyant and emerging markets in Asia and Latin America; the 350 million strong European Union market where our established interests must be revitalized and expanded; and the traditional and rich U.S. market where we must strive to maintain and expand further our market share...We want to place more focus on small and medium-sized firms, to diversify our commercial relations beyond traditional markets, to build partnerships with the private sector, and to improve co-ordination with the provinces. Our challenge is to transform Canada from a trading nation to a real nation of traders. In doing so, we must ensure that smaller firms are full participants in this process...Accordingly, we are responding to some of the recommendations of the private sector, as well as to the fiscal reality facing the government, by putting into place a number of important changes to our international business development programs that will make them both more efficient and more cost-effective. The changes, to be effective April 1, include the following: First, assistance under the Industry-Initiated part of the Program for Export Market Development [PEMD] will be focussed on companies with annual sales of less than \$10 million and/or less than 100 employees for a manufacturing firm, and less than 50 employees for a services firm. Second, the Capital Project Bidding component of PEMD will be focussed on small businesses defined by the same criteria. Third, recovered PEMD funds will flow back into the program. New customers will directly benefit from the success of previous PEMD users. Fourth, participation in government-sponsored trade fairs will be cost shared. For companies meeting the small business definition, a sliding scale will be used in determining departmental contributions for trade fair participation. All others will participate at their own cost. In this regard, we also intend to put more emphasis on participation in large, strategic international trade shows, complemented to a lesser degree by smaller, regional shows that are high priority. Fifth, all participants in government-sponsored outgoing business missions will pay all their own costs. Finally, government-initiated international business development programs will be consolidated into one program. Consolidation will help develop a integrated, strategic approach ensuring that limited resources are directed to the markets where the greatest opportunities exist. Over the coming year, we will examine further consolidation of trade programs, including industry-initiated PEMD support...We shall accordingly continue to work with you towards widening the reach of our free trade partnerships and taking advantage of the opportunities created. Together with domestic reforms to enhance our international competitiveness, they provide the basis for sustaining growth and job creation in Canada.

Notes for an Address by the Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, to the Canadian Exporters' Association, Ottawa, Ontario, February 22, 1995, 95/13

The scale of the human tragedy in Rwanda dwarfs the many other humanitarian crises that challenge the international community at this time...It is the Rwandan people who have suffered most grievously from the genocide, but many of those who fomented ethnic hatred preach the same message from the safety of the refugee camps, a message that would prolong the plight of the refugees, destabilize the countries of origin and asylum, and consign the region to a cycle of instability, war and human tragedy. This must be stopped...I have had the opportunity in the last few days to visit victims of this region's conflicts in camps and temporary holding institutions. What we must remember here are the faces of those frightened, innocent victims — women, men, seniors, but especially the children. Our deliberations here in Burundi this week must recognize that nothing takes precedence over assuring these victims and all other citizens of this region that they do have a future here — one of peace, hope and prosperity for all. This focus must hold our attention and inspire our deliberations here in Bujumbura.

Notes for an Address by the Honourable Christine Stewart, Secretary of State (Latin America and Africa), to the Regional Conference on Assistance to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in the Great Lakes Region, Bujumbura, Burundi, February 15, 1995, 95/12

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 6-12: World Summit on Social Development, Copenhagen
- March 12: Commonwealth Day
- March 20: Francophonie Day

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