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MINISTER'S MESSAGE

The global market is an increasingly demanding place. Canada's future prosperity depends on our collective ability to compete at home and abroad. One third of Canadian jobs depend on trade. We cannot ignore the changes that surge through the world economy, but we must find ways to manage and take hold of the opportunities that present themselves.

The government wants to create conditions that are favourable to a more competitive and prosperous economy. To this end, Canada continues to seek a successful Multilateral Trade Negotiation (MTN) agreement at the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations and stronger economic ties with the Pacific Rim, and to seize the opportunities secured by the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and a negotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The International Trade Business Plan is an element of our overall trade agenda to make Canada more internationally competitive. The larger Prosperity agenda, of which trade is a part, emphasizes not only that we must compete, but that we can.

This document brings together the international trade, technology, and investment strategies and activities of three federal departments: External Affairs and International Trade Canada (EAITC), Industry, Science and Technology Canada (ISTC), and Investment Canada. We seek your comments on it, as your participation is key to making the plan a success.

All three departments play a vital role in helping Canadian companies meet the challenges of global competition. Meeting those challenges and winning creates Canadian jobs and a stronger economy. We expect that future updates of this Business Plan will incorporate the international activities of other federal departments and agencies, and will reflect our shifting priorities and objectives in response to changes in international market conditions.

By rising to the challenge of global competition, we strengthen our collective prosperity and help create greater opportunities for our young people. We also lay a stronger foundation to support our social programs, arts and culture, which all Canadians cherish. Canadians have demonstrated that they have the skills and knowledge to compete successfully, and we have the success stories to prove it. This underlines the fact that we have every reason to feel positive about the future.



Michael Wilson
Minister of Industry, Science and Technology
and Minister for International Trade