

merging of founding nations with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. And like Canada, the C.S.F.R. is facing the challenge of nation-building, within the framework of a federal system that embodies both national unity and cultural diversity.

Canada's unity and security can be secured by building a competitive economy. Economic prosperity in the twenty-first century will depend on how best we develop our human resources, not simply on how efficiently we extract our natural resources.

Our federal government's Prosperity and Competitiveness Initiative has given Canadians an opportunity to contribute to developing a plan of action to ensure a prosperous economic future. It is intended to engage every Canadian in meeting the challenges of a changing global market. Meeting these competitive challenges will require the commitment and long-term effort of every Canadian.

Industrial sectors, educators, entrepreneurs, governments and individual Canadians will all play critical roles in making the changes we need to secure our prosperity and that of our children.

Canada's economic success has depended on the hard work of generations of her people. Equally, our prosperity depends on our strong trade relationships with countries around the world. In Canada, prosperity is tied to international trade -- one in three Canadian jobs depends on it. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States, for example, has secured access for our firms to a vast market. The North American free trade negotiations, if successful, will extend the FTA to include Mexico and create even more trade opportunities for Canadian business.

By ensuring the freer movement of goods, services, and investment, agreements like these increase trade and provide shared prosperity. The Czech and Slovak Federal Republic's recent associate membership in the European Economic Community is a step toward freer trade and prosperity. The Republic should be congratulated on this move.

Open economies and free trade pave the way to prosperity. One need only look at the thriving economies of Hong Kong and Singapore as cases in point. The U.S.-Canada trade relationship -- and the trade relationships among the member states of the European Community -- are excellent examples of peaceful relations through shared prosperity. Never has the world prospered as it has since the advent of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).