

600 million people, a wealth of natural resources, and an enviable level of economic development.

Developments in Mexico are an important part of the changes taking place in the hemisphere. Mexico too has turned its back on the economics of the past and is opening itself to a new and brighter future.

An agreement between our three countries will help to strengthen ties and promote common goals and shared values. Our societies will benefit not only from greater economic exchange but also from increased interaction among our people. In the words of one of Canada's greatest prime ministers, Sir Wilfred Laurier, "... the experience of all ages abundantly testifies that trade is ever the most potent agency of peace, amity, and mutual respect between nations."

By working together as three great nations on a common project, we will contribute to building a more prosperous future for the continent and for the hemisphere.

For some, the rapid changes taking place on our globe seem fraught with risk. I see them as filled with promise. By responding constructively and creatively, we should be able to manage change to our common advantage rather than resisting it to our common disadvantage.

The last time the world faced such momentous changes was more than four decades ago. The response was a bold new global system to create order out of the chaos of fifteen years of depression and war.

Based upon an unselfish U.S. commitment to liberalism and multilateralism, institutions like the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the GATT brought about the greatest increase in economic and political well-being in history.

If we can keep the risks in check, the 1990s offer the potential to unleash another round of similarly creative forces. A trilateral trade agreement could prove a stepping stone to a new and better world trading order.

For Canada, the object is not an exclusive trading bloc but rather a building block for further international cooperation. We are not interested in loosening our other ties across the Atlantic and Pacific. Indeed, a strong North American partnership is a natural and necessary complement to strong Atlantic and Pacific partnerships within a vibrant multilateral trading system. Canada, the United States and Mexico have many common interests in Europe and in the Asia-Pacific region. We may achieve them