

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE



Opening doors to world markets creates new and exciting opportunities for Canadian business. Increased trade and investment opportunities abroad mean increased export sales, and exports generate jobs and growth back home for all Canadians.

Last year, Canada's total exports of goods and services reached another all-time high of \$343 billion, as more and more Canadians took their products to the global marketplace. While we can — and should — celebrate our accomplishments, we must remember that our export success comes, in large part, as a result of improvements in our access to foreign markets.

Around the globe, tariffs, red-tape and other obstacles to commerce are coming down. Canada continues to play a leadership role in moving toward a world in which trade moves freely — in a manner that promotes Canadian values. However, much remains to be done. That's why, as Canada's Minister for International Trade, improving our access to foreign markets is one of my top priorities.

Opening Doors to the World: Canada's International Market Access Priorities, 1998 outlines the range of initiatives the Government will pursue this year.

It presents our goals for work in the World Trade Organization (WTO); in regional bodies, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) initiative; and directly with key partners such as the United States, to open doors for Canadian exporters and investors. It describes dozens of specific obstacles that we will tackle in 1998. Finally, it highlights market-opening results from 1997, such as the WTO's Information Technology Agreement, that will provide new opportunities for Canadian business.

In 1998, the Government will continue to work for Canadians to open foreign markets. We will continue to keep these doors open, by resolving problems with our trading partners, and taking actions as necessary to ensure they live up to their commitments. Meanwhile, my Department's Trade Commissioners, based at over 100 offices abroad, will continue to help Canadian firms, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, to walk through these doors and into new markets. Their efforts will be bolstered by our highly successful *Team Canada* trade missions abroad and the recently-created *Team Canada Inc* partnership at home.

Time and again, Canadian business people tell me the Government plays a crucial role in reducing obstacles to doing business abroad. *Opening Doors to the World: Canada's International Market Access Priorities, 1998*, shows how we'll do this — because open doors mean opportunities, prosperity and jobs for Canadians from coast to coast.

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Sergio Marchi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Honourable Sergio Marchi
Minister for International Trade