



II. Introduction

For Canada, the global trading environment remains one of the brightest in decades: Canadian products and services are in increasing international demand, and trade, capital and technologies are flowing across borders as never before. In fact, over the 1990's, Canada has emerged as an international trading powerhouse.

Indeed, trade has become such a significant part of our economy that one out of every three jobs in this country is now tied to our ability to sell abroad. Canada's exposure to international competition has energized our economy, spurred innovation and created hundreds of thousands of new opportunities for Canadians.

Canada can take pride in its achievement of having become one of the world's largest players with respect to international trade and investment activities. In terms of dollar amount, in 1999, Canada ranked sixth in merchandise exports and imports, twelfth in exports and eighth in imports of commercial services, and eighth in stocks of global direct investment. These achievements attest to the success of our continuing efforts to create a more open global trading environment abroad and improve competitiveness at home. Today, Canada is reaping the prosperity associated with trade and investment as never before, resulting in higher living standards for Canadians.

To ensure secure and predictable access to the world for Canadian traders and investors, the government will continue its efforts to bring down barriers in key markets. This means strengthening the institutions and the rules that govern international trade and investment, forging relationships with new partners, and ensuring that other countries live up to their commitments.

Opening Doors to the World: Canada's International Market Access Priorities – 2001 presents significant market-opening results over the past year and outlines the government's priorities for 2001 to further improve access to foreign markets. The government will pursue these goals multilaterally, through the World Trade Organization (WTO); regionally, in such forums as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); and bilaterally, with key partners, principally the United States, the European Union, Japan, and through the negotiation of free trade agreements with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries, Costa Rica and