

agreements that have proliferated throughout the western hemisphere. Each of our suggestions is predicated on the notion that the best guarantee of democratic development, labour advancement, and environmental protection in the western hemisphere rests fundamentally with our collective commitment to further trade and investment liberalization.

The first concrete step towards western hemispheric integration begins with Chile. The prompt accession of Chile to the NAFTA offers more than access to a high-growth market of some 14 million people — a dynamic market that is already the destination for over \$4 billion in Canadian investment. Chilean accession is important because it will help to ensure that the NAFTA architecture remains dynamic, flexible, and open. Chilean accession also offers Canada a new partner to tackle the undeniably difficult trade issues of the future, as well as a more balanced negotiating framework within which to achieve these goals. Finally, Chilean accession to the NAFTA represents the key to opening the emerging South American market as a whole. Once Chile is in the NAFTA it becomes that much more difficult for South America to evolve into an exclusionary bloc — and that much more difficult for the NAFTA itself to turn inward.

Indeed, in a real sense the NAFTA — leaving aside such prosaic matters as acronyms — will no longer be the NAFTA, post-Chile. The NAFTA will have moved beyond North America. It will have demonstrated its capacity to grow and expand. It will be part way to fulfilling its potential as an open market of over 800 million representing some \$9 trillion in GDP [gross domestic product].

This in turn will force us to contemplate — quite soon if momentum is to be maintained — how we relate to, or embrace, the remainder of the continent. Mercosur, the Group of Three, the Andean Pact, CARICOM, the Central American Common Market, and the newly created Association of Caribbean States all share the same objectives — greater economic growth and stability, and trade liberalization within the hemisphere. The alternative is a wasteful and confusing myriad of sub-regional trade arrangements that can only be a brake upon the private sectors in all our countries as they try to make sense of conflicting trade rules.

How do we arrange the marriage of the Americas? Do we contemplate formal trade linkages among the NAFTA, Mercosur and other sub-regional agreements, or will these be subsumed into a "single undertaking"? Should we be ambitious in outlining future schemes for hemispheric integration in Miami, or should we build the structure one country at a time?

Regardless of the mechanisms or modalities, North America must signal its fundamental willingness to take a "great leap forward." Expectations are high. If Chilean accession to the