

Shortly after becoming Canada's Trade Minister, I travelled to Sintra, Portugal to attend the regular meeting of Trade Ministers of Japan, United States and European Economic Community. There I met Miti Minister Tamura for the first time and we worked together to combat trade protectionism. The frank and informative discussions of this small group were an important prelude to the GATT meeting at Punta del Este, Uruguay, which launched the new MTN Round after an intensive week of hard negotiation.

Canada and Japan share concern about the growth of protectionism worldwide and in the U.S. market in particular. Barriers to trade are, quite simply, barriers to business.

Of interest to you, I am sure, is the Canada-U.S. relationship. Canada wants a better, more certain trading arrangement with the United States -- a country with whom we share \$150 billion of trade. Traditionally we have been each other's biggest customer. We believe that the largest trading relationship in the world warrants special and specific attention. We will persevere to reach a balanced agreement that will secure our access to our largest market and will open new opportunities for Canadian exporters. To be successful, this agreement must be balanced and bring advantages to both sides. I firmly believe this can be achieved.

I am equally confident that a new arrangement with the U.S., one which is fully consistent with GATT, will stimulate an expansion of trade generally, including with Japan, and will serve as a useful catalyst to the new MTN round.

Canada is equally determined to enhance our economic partnership with Japan, our second largest trading partner. We endorse the comments about the new Canada made by Mr. Kanao at the end of his visit last month to Canada.

There should be no doubt about the importance Canada accords to Japanese participation in our economy. Canadians in both the public and private sectors want to emphasize this message.

A group of distinguished Canadians have joined me in Japan. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce them to you.

My parliamentary colleague, Bill Kempling, is a veteran member of the House of Commons and Chairman of the Canada/Japan Parliamentary Group.