

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INVESTMENT CENTRE (ITIC)

Inaugural Meeting -- April 19, 2006

Mission Statement

The Trade Centre will:

- develop new insights through research and analysis of existing trade and investment barriers, new opportunities and best practices;
- measure and monitor Canada's progress in global trade and investment, both in general, and with respect to specific policy and business objectives;
- serve as the reporter, integrator and communicator of current and emerging knowledge;
- promote informed public dialogue and debate on both constraints and possibilities
- prepare recommendations for change that will strengthen the performance of Canadian businesses in the global economy

Priority Research Themes

The discussion among investors and Conference Board staff identified six themes as priority areas for research by ITIC in the first three years:

1. *Mapping exercise - Canadian trade and investment today*
 - by region, sector and destination
 - series of case studies on supply and investment chains of Canadian businesses
 - covering resources/services/manufacturing/technology sectors
2. *Forecasting/outlook for Canada's trade and investment*
 - major global trends and perspective
 - specific Canadian sectors
 - add "cybernetics" through engagement among stakeholders
3. *Best practices and benchmarking in international trade and investment*
 - international business practices
 - design and implementation of trade and investment policies – by other countries, regions, sectors, businesses, etc
4. *Critical mass needed for trade and investment – constraints faced by SMEs*
 - market failure
 - specific barriers to trade and investment for SMEs

5. *FDI, inward & outbound*

- attitudes, barriers
- benefits to Canada
- linkage of FDI with trade

6. *Thickening of the border between Canada and the US*

- infrastructure
- security and passport issue

Where appropriate, this research would take into account the analytic framework provided by The Conference Board of Canada, i.e. impacts and implications relative to U.S. vs. global, policy vs. business best practices