



Bringing Asia Pacific Home to Canada's Youth

The Government of Canada wants CYAP to be the year when young Canadians look to the Asia Pacific region and see their own futures. APEC ministerial meetings held in Canada during 1997 will include activities to engage youth in discussions of issues being considered by Ministers. Youth journalists will be encouraged to report on the proceedings.

Youth participation in APEC events will be complemented by CYAP events designed specifically for Canadian youth. In December Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy announced that a national youth conference, "Asia Connects/Cherchons l'Asie" will be held in Winnipeg, May 4 to 11. The conference will bring together Canadian senior high school and post-secondary students from across Canada, international students studying in Canada, residents of Winnipeg, and Asian youth from the Philippines and Malaysia (Chairs of APEC 1996 and 1998).

"CYAP is about giving youth a window on Asia Pacific through which to learn new skills, meet other youth from the Asia Pacific region, and discover future career opportunities", said

Minister Axworthy.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade is sponsoring the conference which is being organized by the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada in cooperation with The Students' Commission, a youth training organization with expertise in high-tech conference delivery.

The event will create "virtual communities" of youth, linking up to twelve conference sites across Canada with the national site in Winnipeg. Using communication technologies, young people will explore economic and social issues that will shape their future, receive on-site training in the use of multi-media/media technology, team building, Internet/website technology, and will increase cross-cultural awareness within an Asian context.

During 1997, many youth activities will receive designation as CYAP events, for example:

- AISEC's National Congress in Winnipeg, January 1-6, focusing on the role of youth in an interdependent global society.
- McGill University's Model APEC forum in Montreal, January 30 - February 2, as part of the annual model United Nations conference.

(Address by Minister Axworthy on January 3).

- Capilano College, 10th anniversary of the Asia Pacific Management Cooperative Program scheduled for a cross-Canada tour at the end of September.

For further information and application forms for the Asia Connects/Cherchons l'Asie youth conference, contact:

Conference Secretariat, Newport Centre, Suite 410, 330 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. R3C 0C4. Tel: (204) 945-6440. Fax: (204) 948-2253, or see the following Internet sites: www.tgmag.ca, www.apfnet.org, or email: asiacon@apfc.apfnet.org.

For more information about CYAP youth events, or if your organization is hosting an event directed at youth with an Asia Pacific focus see <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/~cyap-acap> or call (613) 944-4000 (National Capital Region) or 1-800-267-8376.

An Interview with John P. Bell— Canada's Ambassador for CYAP



John P. Bell was appointed Ambassador for Canada's Year of Asia Pacific in August, 1996. He took up the challenge fresh from a three year posting as Canadian High Commissioner to Malaysia. He knows Asia, both its politics and its business.

Q: What is your job for 1997?

Ambassador Bell:
I'll act as a catalyst to encourage Canadians to take advantage of APEC events and to create new business, youth and cultural events. We want to inform people about the potential for collaboration and facilitate the development of new cultural and business ties with Asia Pacific, especially for youth and small and medium-sized businesses.

Q: Who do you hope will participate in CYAP?

Ambassador Bell:
Canadians from every region. We want Canadians to know that there are many opportunities for us to participate in the development of the Asia Pacific region — in areas such as the environment and sustainable development, human resources development, training and education, infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications — the possibilities are endless.

From the departure of the Prime Minister's Team Canada 1997 trade mission and the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum in January, to the APEC Leaders' Meeting in November, we will be emphasizing the theme of "the Asia Pacific community." We will be reaching across the Pacific Ocean, and working together within Canada to capture the opportunities that are available to Canadians.

Q: What will you count as success?

Ambassador Bell:
By the end of Canada's Year of Asia Pacific, I hope we create a legacy of interest and enthusiasm for the opportunities that being a Pacific nation presents. In particular, I hope Canadian businesses, especially small and medium-sized businesses, will have struck new and stronger alliances with Asian partners to increase exports and create jobs for Canadians. I also hope that many young Canadians will have begun, through language training or internships in Canadian companies for instance, to make Asia Pacific a part of their future.



In 1995, five of the top ten Canadian export markets were in the Asia Pacific region. Exports to Japan increased by 24% from 1994 to 1995, and collectively to Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia by 47%.



Philippines President Fidel Ramos bids farewell to Prime Minister Chrétien after the November 1996 APEC Leaders' Meeting which Ramos chaired. Canada assumes the chair of APEC in 1997. The annual meeting will be held in Vancouver.