

international front, we are helping to strengthen international laws and institutions needed to ensure effective solutions to our shared problems. By working together with our international partners — in the United Nations, the Group of Seven, the Commonwealth and La Francophonie — Canada is playing an important role in establishing a global regime to protect the environment.

There is reason to be optimistic. In recent years, people around the world have gained a better understanding of the environmental problems that we face together. We know that protection of the environment must take place at the same time as do improvements in economic conditions and that a strong economy and healthy environment are mutually reinforcing. Technologies are being developed that can help the world achieve economic development while putting less stress on the environment. Diplomatic initiatives such as the upcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development are focusing the world's attention on instruments of international co-operation that will enable us to achieve sustainable development.

Canada has a special role to play. We are a major participant in the negotiation of international environmental agreements; our scientists are contributing to a better understanding of ecological issues; and our industries have already begun to provide a range of environmental goods and services to an international market where these are increasingly in demand. Our reputation for supporting international co-operation, our technological and scientific resources and our efforts to promote environmental protection at home make Canada's contribution significant.

Protection of the global environment is an enormous challenge. At the same time, it presents an unprecedented opportunity for international collaboration. Canada is committed to meeting this challenge by working closely with its international partners. Only by working together can we protect our environment and ensure mutual prosperity for generations to come.