

- Preserving and Strengthening Democracy, Justice and Human Rights
- Economic Integration and Free Trade
- Eradication of Poverty and Discrimination

At the Santiago Summit, leaders approved a plan of action containing 28 mandates under the aforementioned themes, which complement commitments endorsed at the First Summit of the Americas.

Since the Miami Summit in 1994, Canada has been active in translating Summit mandates into action at home and in the Hemisphere, and in monitoring implementation through the SIRG. Follow-up is critical to ensuring that the Summits are successful in advancing the hemispheric agenda and that progress made on commitments endorsed by leaders is monitored and reported.

Canada and the Summits of the Americas is an overview of efforts undertaken by Canada to support commitments made by leaders at previous summits. While the Report focusses primarily on the Santiago Plan of Action, references to mandates emanating from the 1994 Miami Summit of the Americas are also included as many of these commitments continue to be implemented. The report is divided into four sections and mirrors the four themes of the Santiago Plan of Action.

Education: The Key to Progress

Chapter I reviews progress achieved in improving access to quality education and training. Among other things, it examines fellowships and exchange programs; development and use of information and communications technologies in education, including distance education; educational statistics and quality evaluation; programs for vulnerable populations; education for the workplace; professionalization of teachers; and intercultural education.

The chapter describes how Canada facilitates access to higher education; incorporates marginalized groups into classrooms; develops standards for reading, writing, mathematics and science; offers training for greater integration into the workplace; and uses technology to link schools and communities to the rest of the Hemisphere. It shows how Canada's education system offers Canadians a brighter future and the opportunity to compete and succeed in a knowledge-based economy, and it illustrates the federal, provincial and territorial governments' commitment to ensuring that all Canadians have access to quality lifelong learning opportunities.

A number of strategies and initiatives for developing strong literacy skills and for improving access to education/training are examined. The chapter also highlights efforts made across Canada to integrate and maximize the participation of vulnerable groups including women, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, socio-economically disadvantaged Canadians, people facing cultural and/or linguistic barriers, and members of visible minorities.

Because quality education depends on the skills and knowledge of teachers, a number of teacher training programs are being created in Canada and internationally to ensure ongoing professional development. In Canada, these programs are helping to regulate the teaching profession; set