

Team Canada also opens doors to a new image of Canada abroad, and makes selling our products and services easier. People learn that Canada is more than just a natural resource-based economy. Team Canada "places a new brand image of Canada" by making people aware of other Canadian areas of expertise, such as in high technology, telecommunications, and the aerospace industries. And other areas of expertise also include social-benefit type businesses, such as healthcare, and education, which are also of interest to foreign governments. On the mission to Latin America, 64 educational institutions took part. This type of involvement helps Team Canada "tell the Canadian story" better, to showcase our different interests and capabilities. Indeed the mission to Latin America -as the largest and most comprehensive so far - did "tell the Canadian story" as best possible in a 10-day mission.

Lastly, Team Canada opens the door to a new Canadian self-image within the global community. "I think as we trade differently, and as we discover our momentum and our confidence, we are also transforming how we see ourselves and our role within the international community. And I think that's positive." Through trade with emerging markets Canada is discovering different parts of the Canadian identity and is continuing to evolve its trade history. The country started with deep roots in Europe, moved on to build strong trade ties with the U.S., and has recently discovered the Asia Pacific.

In Canada's process of discovering the Asia Pacific, the Asian-Canadian community has transformed Canada culturally and economically. It has brought Canada to the doorstep of Asia Pacific, a region that has half of the world's GDP and two-fifths of the world's population. Now Canada is on the cusp of discovering Latin America. Later this week the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) will be launched. Canada is very involved in establishing this new trading community and in strengthening its ties with the region. In addition to hosting a Ministerial meeting next year, Canada is hosting the annual meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) in 2000, and hosting the Pan American Games. Our increased trade with Latin America will lead us to discover a real fascination and compatibility with the region and yet another side of our Canadian personality.

On the whole, Canada is well positioned strategically within the three big regions of tomorrow: APEC (Asian Pacific Economic Co-operation Forum), Latin America and Europe. We are members in two of these trading blocs (APEC and FTAA) and have deep roots in the third region.

Trade is immensely important to Canada. Our GDP is almost 40 per cent-based on trade. One out of three jobs depends directly on export, and we have one of the world's highest dependencies on trade for wealth creation. Moreover, as the country is too small in population to trade with itself, and as internal trade barriers exist, trade beyond our frontiers is nothing short of a necessity.