SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (S&T) RELATIONS

Canada and Japan have a long history of cooperation in S&T - an official S&T consultative process has been in place for 10 years. Negotiations toward a bilateral agreement began in 1983 as a means of giving further impetus to the expanding relationship. These negotiations were successful, and Canada and Japan concluded an Agreement in May 1986 during Prime Minister Mulroney's visit to Japan. The Agreement provides a formal stimulus to the expansion of joint research and development projects across a broad spectrum of peaceful technologies.

Pursuant to the S&T Agreement, the first meeting of the Joint Committee took place in Vancouver in the fall of 1986. Some 75 existing projects were brought under the Agreement, and eight new proposals were approved. Collaborative efforts range from agriculture to laser development and space science.

The Agreement is seen as a useful means of moving the Canada-Japan S&T relationship in the direction of joint technology development. Japan's rapidly growing status as a world force in S&T development provides Canada with a further incentive for closer cooperative efforts. An initiative undertaken by the Canadian government, the Technology Awareness and Adjustment Program (TAAP) for Japan, is but one example. The Program has funded a number of major industry-led missions to strategic sectors in Japan over the past two years. The objective is to make the new technology knowledge gained available Canada-wide. The Technology Inflow Program (TIP) of the Department of External Affairs is also in high demand for Japan.

The Kanao Report of the Japanese Economic Mission to Canada commented favourably on the extent to which Canada was concentrating its efforts on the development of high technologies. The Report predicted, as a result of both countries' great potential in this area, further cooperation through exchanges of technologies or joint development.

Just as Canada has noticed the considerable success of Japanese initiatives in the S&T sector, so too have the Japanese been favourably impressed by Canadian technology, especially in the fields of space, communications, computer software, urban transit, environmental, medical, agricultural and energy processing. Both countries will build on their complementary strengths to forge an even stronger S&T relationship in the coming years.