

*funds available to DFAIT, and consult with industry groups and others in the design of targeted and coordinated information campaigns.*

The Government has consistently maintained a solid capability both at home and in the field to implement initiatives aimed at advancing Canadian interests in the North American context, and is currently undertaking an exercise which will strengthen these activities. DFAIT's 2003 *Strategic Planning and Priorities Framework*, which will inform the Department's activities and budget allocations over the next three years, lists Canada-US and Canada-Mexico relations to be among our top priorities.

*Budget 2003* provides funding over 5 years to bolster Canada's ability to actively engage at local and regional levels across the United States. This includes the creation of new Consulates General and satellite offices that will focus on strategic issues and deliver targeted advocacy to promote Canadian interests, as well as up to 20 Canadian honorary Consuls in cities where we do not have offices. DFAIT, Industry Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, are working in partnership on this initiative and have committed to reallocate resources. Marking a new and innovative approach to expanding international markets for small- and medium-sized cultural entrepreneurs, Canadian Heritage has recently funded the posting of Cultural Trade Development Officers to the Consulates General in Los Angeles and New York. The Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and Emergency Preparedness (OC�PEP) will be deploying a Counsellor to the Canadian Embassy in Washington to liaise with counterpart US departments and agencies. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) has also increased its representation in the United States to better enhance cross-border public safety cooperation.

In response to increasing interest in Mexico, the Government is augmenting its staff at the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City. This summer, a new position to promote Canadian agriculture interests will be staffed by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. In fall 2002, EDC co-located an office within the Canadian Consulate General in Monterrey. Independently, the Canadian Tourism Commission has expanded its office in Mexico City in recognition of the growing number of Mexican tourists to Canada (143,000 in 2002).

### **Recommendation 3**

*The Government should also ensure that there is coherence and coordination among all federal activities in which significant North American relationships are involved. To that end, consideration could be given to creating a special Cabinet Committee on North American Relations. Such a high-level committee could be co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and could include other ministers*

