

The 400 delegates on the Prime Minister's Team Canada trade mission to Beijing, Shanghai and Hong Kong (February 9-18) can have complete confidence in the business programs being planned for them by the Canadian trade commissioners in each city. For the February 11-13 Beijing program, the Canadian Embassy also has the strong support of the Canada China Business Council (CCBC), a Canadian private sector non-profit member organization whose very purpose is helping Canadian companies to find partners in China.

In the wake of the Asian financial crisis, China's economy overall has maintained strong growth trends, and the market for Canadian technology, products and services remains quite strong. Over the last quarter century, Canada-China bilateral trade has grown rapidly, from \$161 million in 1970, when diplomatic relations were established, to \$11.5 billion in 1999. Bilateral trade with Hong Kong totalled \$2.4 billion in 1999, with another \$5.3 billion in two-way direct investment flows in 1998.

Founded in 1978, the CCBC is widely regarded as being one of the leading bilateral associations representing Canada anywhere in the world. The Council has a mandate to stimulate and support trade in goods and services, investment and technology transfer; to achieve greater economic growth and a closer relationship between Canada and China; to provide practical and focused assistance to business; and to be the voice of the Canadian business community on matters of Canada-China relations, both for the government and the public at large.

Offices in both countries

Offices in Toronto, Vancouver, Beijing and Shanghai, as well as chapters in Ottawa, Montreal, Calgary, and Vancouver, serve the CCBC's 270 members, which include 31 Chinese companies and several Canadian educational institutions.

The CCBC provides market information, business and logistical support and services, and potential project leads to its members. "We provide a great deal of advice and infor-

events. The Team Canada business program will include seminars on different industry sectors, a seminar on financing, and one on the nuts and bolts of doing business in China.

Joining Team Canada mission to China

Canada China Business Council

mation, either one-on-one or through seminars," explains CCBC Executive Director Fred Spoke.

Close ties to both governments

The Council regularly teams up with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) to organize seminars and business events, host incoming Chinese delegations, plan business missions to China, and produce publications.

The Council is also a strong complement to the Canadian Trade Commissioners in China. Through its offices in Beijing and Shanghai, the Council is well positioned to help Canadian companies find potential partners and provide corporate advocacy for companies meeting market barriers.

The Council has close ties with Chinese officials at all levels of government. "When a Chinese delegation comes to Canada, we are often contacted to put together a business program for them," explains Spoke. "We've had senior Chinese leaders come to our Annual General Meeting since 1994."

Strong support for Beijing program

Its close connections with both DFAIT and China made the CCBC a natural choice to assist with the business program on the Beijing leg of the Team Canada mission.

The Council is helping the Canadian Embassy to arrange speakers, set up seminars, and ensure that the appropriate Chinese officials attend

A feature of the Team Canada visit to Beijing is the gala banquet, co-hosted by the CCBC and the Prime Minister, in the Great Hall of the People. Between 2000 and 2500 people, including senior leaders from both governments and Canadian and Chinese company representatives, are expected to attend the dinner.

Many CCBC members will be among the mission delegates, and the Council will be represented by its Chairman, André Desmarais, its President, Earl Drake, and other senior managers.

On the Team Canada mission, the importance the Council places on collaboration of every kind will go a long way toward facilitating opportunities for partnership and investment for Canadian companies.

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