

Equally significant is that the Francophonie Summit is being held in a province where two thirds of the population is English-speaking. That says volumes about values cherished by Canadians: tolerance, openness and respect for other cultures. Canada's membership in La Francophonie benefits all Canadians, whatever their language. By hosting the Summit, for instance, Canada can promote its human security agenda and work for a safer and more prosperous world.



Last but not least, the Moncton Summit is the Summit of Youth. Young people from several countries have been consulted and listened to; they have been involved in Summit preparations and all the events leading up to the meeting. Says Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of La Francophonie, leaders want to see this approach adopted more generally. The aim is to make La Francophonie an undertaking for everyone, transcending boundaries and generations. ●—

This Fall's Other Summits

Canada is participating in two other summits this fall. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum meets September 12–13 in Auckland, New Zealand, and the Commonwealth meets November 12–15 in Durban, South Africa.

APEC

The major themes of the APEC meeting are:

- expanding opportunities for business;
- strengthening the functioning of markets; and
- broadening understanding of APEC and support for it.

While Canada's priorities fit with the Summit's economic agenda, the Canadian delegation will raise other priority issues. These include the importance of addressing social impacts of the Asian financial crisis, promotion of the integration of women's issues in APEC, and ways of helping the region deal with the year 2000 computer problem.

Preceding the Summit on September 9–10 is the APEC Ministerial Meeting, bringing together foreign and trade ministers. With 50 percent of the world's population and 60 percent of its gross domestic product, the Asia-Pacific region is of great importance for Canada's trade, investment and political relations.

The Commonwealth

The central theme for the Commonwealth meeting, chosen by the host South African government, is "People-Centred Development—the Challenge of Globalization."

Canada strongly supports the choice of theme as it coincides with key Canadian foreign policy objectives: sustainable development, human security, democracy and human rights. The prosperity and security of Canada, and of our partners, depend on a stable international economic system and a secure environment for our citizens. The Commonwealth offers Canada an excellent forum for working toward these goals.

Among the events preceding the Summit will be a Commonwealth Youth Forum (November 3–9), a Commonwealth NGO Forum (November 6–8), the Commonwealth Business Forum (November 9–11) and a meeting of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (November 11). ●—

Interview with

To welcome the world to Canada—to display our Francophone side—to showcase our rich culture—to stimulate debate on the major issues of youth, the economy and technology facing La Francophonie today—these are the main objectives of the Moncton Summit, according to Ronald J. Duhamel, Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) (Francophonie).

Canada World View met with Mr. Duhamel to discuss the issues before the Summit and, more broadly, those facing La Francophonie at the dawn of the new millennium. We also asked him what membership in La Francophonie means for Canada.

Canada World View

Mr. Duhamel, the heads of state and government of La Francophonie have been meeting biennially for 13 years now. What has the creation of this organization meant, not only to its members but also to the international community as a whole?

Mr. Duhamel

La Francophonie gradually took shape in the 1960s through ministerial conferences bringing together various countries to discuss education, culture or development. Then in 1970 we created the Agence de coopération culturelle et technique, with the participation of 21 governments. At the first Summit in 1986, there were 41 of us. Now in Moncton, 52 governments will be represented. I think those numbers clearly show that La Francophonie has met a genuine need.

To its members, La Francophonie has provided institutions needed to preserve the French language around the world, to raise awareness of our cultures, to influence world affairs, to bolster our economies, to strengthen human security and to carve out a place for us among the major political blocs.

Canada World View

Can you give us some specific examples of these achievements?