

Our desire to see the end of the American commercial embargo against Cuba is a clear affirmation of our wish. This is a point I took up with my Mexican counterpart, Manuel Tello, when I visited Mexico as the head of the Canadian delegation to the bilateral Joint Ministerial Committee.

We wish to further develop our ties with Latin America. We are very enthusiastic about the possibility of creating a Community that will include the entire Western Hemisphere, from the Canadian Arctic to Tierra del Fuego.

The potential for our trade and investment is enormous. The trilateral North American Free Trade Agreement shows us the way to go. Many steps must be taken, however, before we can achieve such a community.

We wish to encourage open and honest dialogue with our partners regarding our common and respective problems. Together, we must define the results we expect to achieve in order to clearly establish our priorities.

The Organization of American States can play a decisive role in our hemispheric relations, and Canada wishes to make this organization more effective and dynamic.

This government's creation of a position of Secretary of State responsible for Latin America is an indication of our interest in the region. The Honourable Christine Stewart has already made two trips to Latin America to promote Canada's ties with its hemispheric partners. I will leave it to her to talk about our objectives in more detail. Mrs. Stewart also has the responsibility for Africa. It is in this latter capacity that she will lead the Canadian bilateral delegation to the election-monitoring mission in South Africa.

The Asia-Pacific region has become a major economic power. As we stated in our Red Book, our economic prosperity partly depends on our determination to develop our trade relations with the Pacific Rim countries. We will work continually with our private-sector partners to increase export opportunities for our businesses. We also expect to see the region play an increasingly active role in politics and security as its economic power grows.

To show the importance we attach to this area, we have also named a Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific. I know that the Honourable Raymond Chan has already taken initiatives to improve Canada's ties and exchanges with the countries of the region, and that he intends to explain them to you.

With its West Coast open to the Pacific, it is in Canada's interest to develop and diversify its economic and social ties