

Our new government is committed to be a part of this process. As a Canadian from the western region of Canada, I have always been aware of the immense importance and the immense potential of our neighbours across the Pacific. And that understanding, which is second nature in western Canada, has now spread across our country.

For 100 years, we have been a Pacific nation in geography. Now we are a Pacific nation in mentality, looking to a partnership across this ocean as the major source of new economic opportunity for Canada in the decade to come.

Trade and economics are at the root of that partnership, but we expect to blossom into stronger political co-operation within the Pacific region and a growing contact between our cultures. Increasingly, at the UN, at the Economic Summit, and in our approach to trade, Japan and Canada are uniting together to achieve, common international goals.

But, in a sense, we are just beginning the relationship. Both Japan and Canada are responding to modern international events not by turning inward but by reaching out to the wider world. In both our cases that involves changes. It involves changes in our traditions as it involves changes in your traditions. But there is no way that we can meet the new world by being confined by old habits and both our countries recognize that reality.

I simply cannot emphasize enough the importance we place, as a new Government in Canada and a Government that on this question can speak confidently for the people, on establishing a deeper exchange of ideas on a broad range of issues between Canada and Japan, between Canadians and Japanese on issues like economic co-operation, like regional stability, like social development and very many others. My visit to Japan is the first of many opportunities that I expect to have in this capacity to develop a dialogue with leaders of Asia and the Pacific and I will not be alone. My colleague Mary Collins, the member of Parliament for Vancouver Capilano who will be carrying out a special liaison role between our government and the Asia Pacific Foundation and will be having some separate discussions during her time here.

Over the next few months, several of my colleagues in the Canadian government will come to Japan to discuss specific areas of co-operation - in science and technology, in research and development, in fisheries, in energy, in sport, in international trade and other fields. Those arrangements have already been made or are in the process of being made. You will be seeing much more of Canada in Japan over the next year.