

Office of the
Prime Minister



Cabinet du
Premier ministre

In today's fast-paced and increasingly global economy, Asia Pacific has emerged as a highly dynamic economic region of growing importance to Canada. As a Pacific nation and a founding member of the 18-member Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, Canada has an important window on this exciting part of the world.

In addition to introducing Canadian businesses to decision-makers and potential partners throughout the region, APEC is helping open markets in Asia and Latin America. As such, APEC is a vital tool in the Government's strategy for economic growth and job creation at home.

The first international meeting I attended as Prime Minister was the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting at Blake Island, U.S.A., in 1993. The enthusiasm for trade liberalization and economic growth that I sensed at Blake Island was confirmed at the APEC Economic Leaders' meeting in Bogor, Indonesia, the following year, where Leaders from this diverse group of economies established a timetable to achieve free and open trade across the Pacific. We took further steps in Osaka, Japan, in 1995 and in Subic, Philippines, with the Manila Action Plan for APEC in 1996. This year, Canada has taken the helm of APEC. And 1997 is a very important year, as our plans to break down barriers to the free flow of goods, services, and investment across the region's borders come into force. Unleashing the potential of the region's business sector will be key to our success. I intend to work with the Canadian business community to identify the obstacles to trade and investment in the region, to ensure we are addressing them in APEC, during 1997 and beyond.

As chair of the APEC process this year, Canada will see the Asia Pacific world come to its doorstep. Launched with another successful Team Canada trade mission to Asia this past January, the year will culminate in the APEC Ministerial and Leaders' meetings in Vancouver in November, capping an unprecedented year of celebration to mark Canada's Year of Asia Pacific. Taking place across Canada, these activities are providing a unique opportunity to show our partners in the region all that Canada has to offer.

I invite all Canadians to help make 1997 an unforgettable year for Canada in Asia Pacific.

Jean Chrétien

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