

# THE SUMMIT OF THE Americas

DISCOVER OUR

*extended family*

From April 20 to 22, Québec City welcomes leaders of the Hemisphere to the 2001 Summit of the Americas. This landmark event is the third and by far the largest-ever summit meeting bringing together the 34 democratically elected governments of the region.

The Americas are a mirror of today's world. Developed and developing nations rub shoulders in a kaleidoscope of cultures, tongues and traditions. The Hemisphere has four official languages: English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. But in reality, hundreds of local languages and dialects are spoken, and regional variations remain pronounced despite the inroads of globalization.

It's true that economic disparities persist and millions of people lack decent living conditions. Still, more than ever before, poverty eradication is a top priority for the Hemisphere. While progress remains uneven, an idea took root at the 1994 Miami Summit, sprouted in 1998 in Santiago and is coming to flower in Québec.

During its three days, the Summit will further the quest for a better life for all in the Americas. The

focus is on three overarching themes: strengthening democracy, creating prosperity and realizing human potential. These provide the framework for government leaders' discussions plus the parallel meetings of non-government organizations and institutions working to give their fellow citizens a better life.

The Québec Summit and the decisions emerging from it will top the news. But media coverage of the meetings will hardly be the full story. Out of the glare of the headlines a vast structure of co-operation is taking shape, and it is gradually but irrevocably changing the face of the Hemisphere and the relations between its peoples.

This special 40-page issue of **Canada World View** is a voyage of discovery, with Québec as the departure point. We highlight the issues at stake at the Summit, the problems, the possible solutions, the web of ties from Nunavut to Tierra del Fuego, and the people committed to improving the lot of every member of the "*gran familia*."

Come with us to meet the peoples of the Americas. Join us in exploring the rich diversity of our Hemisphere. And to learn more and link up with other explorers from the region, visit <http://www.AmericasCanada.org>—your gateway to a New World of knowledge.

*The Editors*

