

other mechanisms have remained strong, and these have led the push for renewal of the bilateral commercial relationship.

From the very beginning, the Canadian and Japanese private sectors have worked to identify areas in the economic relationship that have been underperforming and to highlight opportunities for greater ambition in furthering the bilateral relationship. Most recently, the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE)¹⁵ and the Nippon Keidanren¹⁶ were key players in leading efforts to revitalize the bilateral economic relationship and examine options for further enhancing trade and investment between the two countries. While private sector leaders have been the traditional focus of stakeholder consultations undertaken by both governments, non-governmental organizations such as the Canada-Japan Forum have also been important in providing strategic advice and recommendations to both Canada and Japan on ways to enhance the bilateral relationship.

Canada-Japan Forum

Recognizing the challenges facing the bilateral relationship, the Prime Ministers of Canada and Japan established the Can-

¹⁵ Founded in 1976, the CCCE is devoted to strengthening Canada's economy and society through the development of sound public policy in Canada, North America and the world. Its member chief executive officers represent all sectors of the Canadian economy. Key members of the CCCE have been constant supporters of the Canada-Japan economic relationship, working closely with government and private sector organizations in Canada and Japan to further promote trade and investment between the two countries.

¹⁶ Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) is a comprehensive economic organization created in May 2002 by the amalgamation of Keidanren (Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) and Nikkeiren (Japan Federation of Employers' Associations). In 2005, their membership comprised 1,329 companies, including 130 industrial associations and 47 regional economic organizations. Keidanren, notably through its Committee on Canada, has been active in promoting measures to improve the business environment in both countries by making representations to the governments of both countries.