

Team Canada 1999

Although its primary aim is to increase trade links and attract investment, Team Canada missions mean much more to the Canadian economy. A key element in Canada's approach to international business development, these missions link government and private sector as equal partners in spurring the continued growth of Canada's economy. One in three jobs in Canada depends largely on trade with other countries. Canada's exports account for more than 40 per cent of its gross domestic product, a higher percentage than in any other G-7 nation. Every billion dollars worth of exports sustains about 11,000 Canadian jobs.

This year's mission is a departure from previous Team Canada efforts. It targets a mature economy key to the Asia-Pacific region rather than focusing on emerging markets. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien has led three previous Team Canada trade missions to Asia: to China and Hong Kong in November 1994; to India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia in January 1996; and to South Korea, the Philippines and Thailand in January 1997. (In January 1998, the Prime Minister also led a Team Canada mission to Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile.)

Team Canada 1999 includes the Prime Minister, provincial premiers and territorial leaders, the Minister for International Trade, the Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific), mayors from major Canadian cities, and business and industry leaders.

Participants from the business world have varied backgrounds. Many are from small and medium enterprises, and they range from young entrepreneurs to tourism promoters. More than 1,600 companies across Canada have gained immediate access to government and private sector leaders in international markets through Team Canada. In past missions, these firms have concluded more than 800 business deals valued at almost \$24 billion.

During this year's mission, the Canadian delegation will meet with many leading political and business figures in Japan to explore ways to strengthen economic ties. Team Canada 1999 will showcase Canadian know-how and expertise to Japanese partners and investors and expose Canadian decision makers to Japanese business strengths.

This mission will target areas of high technology and innovation. The focus will be on electric power and new energy, the environment, information and communications technologies, education, building technologies and materials, biotechnology and food biotechnology, health care, space and aerospace, agriculture and agri-food, and mining and natural resources.