

by distance education facilities. Through the Canada-Mexico reciprocal scholarship program, each government awards 15 annual post-graduate scholarships for study in the other country, and the Canada-Mexico "Bank of Missions" agreement supports the exchange of distinguished writers and artists. The Canadian Embassy in Mexico supports active Canadian Studies centres and delivers a dynamic public diplomacy program to promote Canadian values and culture.

***Building a bilateral foreign policy and security partnership based on issues of mutual interest.*** The Government has been working closely with Mexico to develop a more strategic partnership on global security issues, for example, by cooperating in multilateral fora including the Organization of American States (OAS) and United Nations (UN). Canada and Mexico, working with the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre and the UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations, collaborated on a very successful peacekeeping seminar in Mexico City in 2002. In 1998, Canada and Mexico signed an MOU on Cooperation in Combatting Narcotics Trafficking and Preventing Drug Abuse. A February 2003 MOU expanded Canada-Mexico cooperation in combatting money laundering and organized crime.

### **III PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A BROADER AGENDA OF TRILATERAL COOPERATION**

***Utilizing NAFTA's trilateral mechanisms to their full potential.*** Under the NAFTA and its parallel agreements, the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC) and the North American Agreement on Labour Cooperation (NAALC), firm underpinnings for a constructive trilateral relationship have developed. The NAFTA Commission, under the direction of Trade Ministers, oversees more than 30 working groups and committees which implement various articles of the Agreement. Environment Ministers head the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), the activities of which include: facilitating regional implementation of global agreements such as the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; biodiversity actions such as developing a North American Bird Conservation Initiative; and developing a cooperative agenda to address children's health and the environment. The Commission for Labour Cooperation, headed by Labour ministers who meet annually, promotes effective enforcement of labour laws through annual programs of cooperative activities, consultations and publications on issues such as labour legislation, occupational health and safety, and gender equity. Cooperative activities are normally tripartite (i.e. government, employer and labour).

***Supporting trilateral exchanges outside the NAFTA.*** The North American Forest Commission has provided a policy and technical forum for Canada, the US and Mexico to address issues including fire management, forest products, insects and diseases, and