

are also vitally important and rapidly expanding. In each of these regions, we continue to develop strong economic links and political partnerships. Through the implementation of free trade agreements to our membership in organizations such as la Francophonie, the Commonwealth, and APEC we have substantial ties to a growing number of nations. We are also learning some important lessons.

The market system needs an effective and accountable state to maintain the rule of law, enforce contracts, uphold universal rights, and regulate relations among economic actors. Promoting growth and democracy is far more complex than we first envisioned.

We are seeing positive developments. In a growing number of countries around the world democracy is resurgent, civil society is taking hold and prospects for growth are promising.

Economic and social development are, of course, central to these advances. Whether through development assistance, debt relief, support for sustainable development and good governance, Canada remains committed to playing a role in promoting long-term prosperity and global stability.

7. The global issues agenda

Issues such as population, food security, climate change, and epidemics are of growing international concern. These issues are often highly interdependent and linked to deep systemic problems such as under-development and poverty.

Ultimately, we cannot act as though we live in isolated communities. By taking co-operative action now and building strong multilateral partnerships to address complex global issues, we are helping to protect and promote our own safety and security over the long term.

Conclusions

A view of the global system and Canada's place in it reveals both a sense of optimism and a number of challenges ahead.

The prospects for Canada remain strong. We are more prosperous as a nation than we were five years ago; our trade performance continues to remain strong; and our liberal political and economic values have never been more widely accepted.

Yet the deep structural changes under way present very real challenges as well -- in terms of possible rivalries between key international and regional powers, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, internal strife, damage to major ecosystems, or new threats to our physical safety and health.

The bottom line -- Canada must come to terms with a very different world that is emerging. This will require innovative approaches, strategic and co-operative decision-making, and ensuring that we demonstrate the capacity to meet our commitments across a wide spectrum of issues.

I look forward to working with all of you toward these goals. Thank you for your attention today. I wish you all the best for the remainder of the Diplomatic Forum meetings.



Department of Foreign Affairs
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