

of co-operation

- In 1999 Canada and the European Union established a Working Group on Satellite Navigation. Since then Canada has participated in the early stages of Europe's satellite navigation system (the GALILEO program), and may participate in search and rescue activities and industrial co-operation initiatives.

Environment

Canada and the EU hold differing views on how to implement the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Even so, they recognize that climate change is a serious threat, and both are committed to meeting Kyoto Protocol targets.

In negotiations on other multilateral conventions on the environment, Canada and the EU again tend to differ on specifics but agree on the desired outcome. Most recently, Canada was the first nation to sign and ratify the Stockholm Convention on Persistent

photo: CANAPRESS

Organic Pollutants, completed this past May, and both have signed the 2000 Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. While their negotiating positions were not identical, Canada and the EU agreed in seeing these instruments as vital.

The international community is preparing for Rio+10—a review of progress since the 1992 Earth Summit, to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002. Here and in the longer term, there are many ways in which Canada and the EU can work (or are working) together for a better global environment. Annual meetings of high-level environment officials help keep up the momentum toward co-operation within the EU forum as well as the G-8, the Arctic Council and elsewhere.

Education

In education, Canada has a long tradition of co-operation with European countries, formalized by the 1995

Co-operation Program in Higher Education and Training. This promotes transatlantic student exchanges, even allowing students to earn full credit from their home universities. It also facilitates institutional partnerships and training exchanges. Since 1995, over 1000 participants have studied or worked at 83 European and 42 Canadian post-secondary institutions. In December 2000 the program was renewed for five years.

In a complementary initiative, four institutes of European studies have been established at Canadian universities.

Health

Over the last two years, Canada and the EU have substantially enhanced their ties in the health sector. Supporting these are ongoing information sharing, meetings of technical experts and policy advisers, and consultations on how to strengthen and consolidate co-operation. A priority area for future co-operation is health information—specifically, developing indicators for measuring the performance of health care systems, and reporting this information to citizens, health professionals and policy makers. ●—

photo: DFAIT



In Paris on June 21, 2000, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (left, standing) applauds signing of a 10-year co-operation agreement between Canada and the European Space Agency (ESA). To his left: Canadian Space Agency President W.M. Evans. To his right: ESA President Alain Bensoussau (standing) and Director General Antonio Rodotà.

Michèle Jean

Feeling at home in another country is not always easy. But it was no problem for Michèle Jean during her two-year stint at the Canadian Mission to the European Union in Brussels. Her job as Special Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs involved liaising with EU representatives on health, employment and social affairs issues.

She describes the close co-operation between the 15 member nations as inspiring. "What I found," she says, "was a mental attitude, a philosophy, a desire to protect a system of social values much more in tune with ours in Canada than with that of our American neighbours." In the end, she became convinced that Canada and the EU both have much to gain at many levels from their relationship.

Michèle Jean is now Program Development Counsellor at the Université de Montréal's Faculty of Higher Education. Her connection with Europe remains strong. Recently she was invited to Paris to speak to pharmaceuticals industry representatives about European and Canadian viewpoints on cell therapy and medical ethics.

