

Message from the Prime Minister

For three days in June, the eyes of the world will focus on Halifax, Nova Scotia as Canada proudly hosts the 21st G-7 Economic Summit. From June 15 to 17, I will welcome the leaders of France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. We will be joined by the President of the European Commission, and the Russian President, Boris Yeltsin, will attend part of the discussions.

Meetings such as these are of special importance to young Canadians. They present a golden opportunity for setting forces in motion that will have a positive effect on the future — a future in which the youth of today will live. In a global economy, it's important to pinpoint the problems that face the world. Identifying them and how Canada fits in is the work of this summit.

The Halifax Summit will give us the chance to put a Canadian perspective on the G-7 discussions. The meetings, which I will chair, will be underscored by events that have taken place in Canada and throughout the world over the past year. The main theme of the Summit will be on strengthening the international system so that it can deal with the challenges that lie ahead. Understanding those challenges is the first step toward meeting them — the ground-work for young Canadians who will be making future decisions.


As well, I look forward to making progress on the full range of summit issues. Some of the topics we will discuss are: economic growth and job creation, international trade, the global information highway, nuclear safety, controlling the spread of nuclear weapons, protecting the environment, reducing poverty, transnational crime and migration.

These issues have been the subject of ongoing discussions since the last G-7 in Naples, Italy in 1994. The annual G-7 Summit is only the most visible part of a wide-ranging process of consultation among the world's seven leading industrialized democracies. Between summits, Canadian officials meet with their counterparts at the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and many other international organizations.

The Halifax Summit will be the culmination of a year-long process. The issues the leaders deal with will have been discussed at length already by senior officials from each participating country. Following the Summit, a Declaration will be issued that will reflect the views of the leaders on the issues of global concern. But, most importantly, the Halifax Summit Declaration will reflect a Canadian perspective on world problems and a Canadian approach to their solution.

So, discussions that a previous generation started in the 1970s continue to help build a secure and stable future; a process to pass on to today's youth — tomorrow's leaders.

I am excited that the world will be coming to Halifax this summer. This beautiful, historic city will open its doors to show what an attractive destination it is for both business and pleasure. I am sure that our visitors will leave agreeing with the people of Halifax who have coined the slogan that you'll "Love the way we live."


Jean Chrétien