

These past few weeks have been tumultuous ones in China and a great shock to the many Canadians who have an interest in China and in the relationship between our peoples.

You are aware of the Government's reaction to the brutality of June 4 and to the subsequent campaign of repression unleashed by the regime in Beijing. I announced in the House of Commons on June 5 a series of measures that constituted an initial response to those events, and we have subsequently taken a number of other individual steps.

Today I am announcing several adjustments to Canadian policies in light of the changed circumstances created by the events in China.

Canadians from many walks of life have a stake in our relationship with China. Some Canadians have ties of heritage and language. Academics, professionals and others have spent enormous proportions of their lives learning about China, and sharing the triumph and the tears of China's growing pains. Business people have invested substantial effort and resources - of their own, of their employees and of their stockholders - in building business relations with China. Our farmers have turned their land into a breadbasket for China, and today the China trade represents Canada's largest grain market.

So it is not surprising that there has been such extraordinary attention paid by Canadians to Tiananmen Square and its aftermath. As a country we have a great deal invested in our relationship with the People's Republic and the one-quarter of the world's population that lives there.

It is precisely because of this diversity of legitimate interests that the Government convened last week's "National Round Table", which brought together industrialists, academics, non-governmental organizations and representatives of the Chinese Canadian community. That Round Table produced a virtual consensus on where we should be going in our relationship with China over the next few months, and the few voices dissenting from that consensus argued on points of tactics, not on broad objectives or strategy.

In addition to the National Round Table we have had a special session on China in the House Standing Committee on External Affairs and International Trade.

Both the Prime Minister and I have met with representatives of the Chinese Canadian community, Mr. Mulroney in Vancouver and I here in Ottawa. Our colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigration, subsequently met with representatives of that community in Toronto.