

- **The China Council for International Co-operation on Environment and Development, Phase II & III (14.9 million, from 1997-2007).** This council, co-chaired by the Chinese Vice-Premier, helps China develop integrated policies that recognize the critical link between environmental sustainability and economic and social development.

## **Hong Kong**

- In 1997, China resumed sovereignty over Hong Kong, which became a Special Administrative Region under a “one country, two systems” formula, thereby ending 156 years of British rule. Under this system, Hong Kong will retain its free enterprise system and way of life for 50 years, until 2047. With the exception of defence and foreign relations, Hong Kong has the authority to run its own affairs without interference from Chinese authorities. Nonetheless, its economic and political future continues to be closely linked to that of the Chinese mainland. Hong Kong officials and business people continue to have strong connections to and a keen understanding of the commercial and political dynamics on the mainland. Canada supports preserving Hong Kong’s distinct status and looks forward to the further development of democratic institutions in the region.
- Canada has social, political and trade interests in Hong Kong and has supported and initiated efforts to sustain confidence in Hong Kong’s future. Canadians began arriving in Hong Kong as traders and missionaries in the mid-19th century. Today the Canadian community in Hong Kong has grown to about 200,000, making it the largest Canadian community in Asia.
- During the Second World War, some 550 Canadian soldiers lost their lives in the defence of Hong Kong. This sacrifice is commemorated annually in a memorial service. In 2000, surviving veterans and their families undertook a pilgrimage there.
- Prime Minister Chrétien signed four agreements and initiatives between Canada and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region during the 2001 Team Canada visit, including a memorandum of understanding on film and television co-production, a memorandum of understanding for the promotion and development of Internet learning programs and applications, an agreement on mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, and a workplan on environmental collaboration.