

reputation and we have been pleased to support their exhibition now touring in Europe and the United States.

The Canadian project for the Architectural Biennial was proposed by an ad hoc advisory committee under the chairmanship of Ms. Phyllis Lambert, Founder and Director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal. The other members are Ms. Kim Storey, Regional Representative of the Royal Institute of Architecture of Canada, and Mr. Sandy Hirshen, Director of the School of Architecture at the University of British Columbia.

The Architectural Biennial has taken place only five times before, and Canada has officially participated only once, with an exhibition in 1991 about the Canadian Centre for Architecture. The Centre has become one of the most respected centres for architecture in the world, and I think it is fitting that it will be organizing and co-ordinating Canada's entry next year.

The Government has emphasized the importance of a dynamic cultural sector to help us achieve the objectives we have set for ourselves: the creation of jobs based on our talents for creativity and innovation; the reinforcement of our national identity; and the projection of the image of a country determined to meet the challenges of the emerging global economy.

The dynamism of this sector is reflected in the fact that it now represents almost three per cent of our gross domestic product and employs more than 425 000 Canadians. Its labour force has increased by 122 per cent over the past 10 years, twice the rate of increase of the Canadian labour force as a whole. The vitality of our cultural sector has enriched the lives of Canadians immeasurably. Canadian creators have firmly placed Canada in the international spotlight.

As the Liberal plan for Canada stated: "Culture is the very essence of national identity, the bedrock of national sovereignty and pride. It gives meaning to the lives of all Canadians and enriches the country socially, politically and economically."

Canada is appreciated abroad through the articulation of its cultural expression. For that reason, I consider international cultural relations as one of the three main pillars of Canada's foreign policy, and I am taking steps to revitalize that element of our operations abroad. I am looking forward to the report of the Special Joint Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Policy, which devoted a number of hearings to international cultural relations and higher education and received more than 50 submissions on these topics.

In conclusion, Canada benefits greatly through its participation in major cultural events abroad. These events require a joint effort such as that exhibited in the co-operation among my