

Our approach to China must become more closely tailored to the demands of this increasingly sophisticated market. The China of tomorrow will be more open, entrepreneurial, consumer oriented — and regional. Business will have to respond, as will governments.

It was for that reason that this autumn we opened a new Canadian trade office in Guangzhou and strengthened our trade presence in Shanghai. We have also placed one of our trade commissioners in the Canada-China Business Council office here in Beijing. In the future, we shall look for innovative ways to form partnerships with the private sector to establish a Canadian business presence elsewhere in China, from Chongqing to Harbin.

The Canada-China Business Council has contributed in a major way to making this week's events an outstanding success. The presence here today of delegations from the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Business Council on National Issues and the Canadian Chamber in Hong Kong also attest to the fact that Canada-China trade and investment relations will be on the top of Canada's economic agenda. I congratulate you all. No one can afford to approach a market like China on his or her own. We speak today of global networks, integrated communications, and interdependent economies. Similarly, to succeed as individuals, we must continue to rely on teamwork as well as work.

I want to congratulate the Canada-China Business Council, all its members, both Canadian and Chinese, who have worked so effectively to bring together this annual meeting and to make a great success of the visit of Team Trade Canada. Together we share a vision of the special relationship between Canada and China. This meeting serves as a reaffirmation of our joint commitment and determination to make this vision a reality.

Thank you.