

As I have said, a tangible Pacific community is still some distance away, and in the interim Canada must nourish and expand the bilateral relationships which form the foundation of community development. This is no more important than with Japan, our second largest economic partner and the dominant Asian player in the region.

Unquestionably, the future holds great promise for Canada-Japan economic relations in the Pacific context. My efforts and those of the government, like yours today, will be directed to ensuring that these prospects become a reality for the benefit of both our nations and of the region generally.

I am confident that academics and other interested persons, ministers and officials from provincial governments, media organizations, and most importantly, the business community itself, will be working with us to the same end.