

Former Prime Minister Trudeau paved the way for strengthening bilateral co-operation during his 1974 visit to Paris. He suggested that the consultation level of the France-Canada Economic Commission be raised to ministerial status. This commission now is assisted by two working groups of government officials--one is a working group on industry and agriculture, and the other is a working group on energy and primary products. These groups have met on several occasions and have staked out areas for increased economic co-operation. They have also facilitated information exchanges between French and Canadian industrial firms and have arranged visits by experts of a sectoral (i.e. telecommunications) and a geographical nature (i.e. visit of the French National Council of French Employers to Western Canada in June 1978).

The visit to Canada of the Prime Minister of France, Mr. Raymond Barre gave a new impetus to these exchanges, particularly in the energy sector (the project to liquify natural gas in the North).