

of the need to integrate economic and environmental goals. Canadians have developed considerable expertise in waste management and pollution abatement technology. Some of our universities are world leaders in environmental research. Canada is therefore pleased to be co-operating closely with the Mexican government in several important projects and in developing better means to enforce environmental standards.

One of these projects involves H.A. Simons of Vancouver, with its partner Ecosistemas, who are pursuing major environmental projects with the government of the state of Vera Cruz. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has supported the project feasibility studies, valued at approximately \$1 million. S.M./Groupe Dynamis of Quebec City has also concluded major studies of hazardous waste management for the city and state of Mexico, also supported by CIDA. The implementation of these projects will make the environmental sector one of the most important areas of activity for Canadian firms in Mexico.

Another area in which there has been close consultation is in labour co-operation. Yesterday at the JMC, officials continued discussions on a Canada-Mexico Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on labour co-operation, which we hope to be signed shortly. The MOU will offer Canadian assistance in helping Mexico improve its capacity to enforce its already extensive labour legislation.

These are some of the important details of the Canada-Mexico friendship. They are important. But a friendship is also a question of attitude; certainly the goodwill between our two countries has never been greater. In part this results from a major change in Canada's foreign policy orientation in the last seven years. In that time, the Government of Canada has had a profound and positive change of attitude toward the nations of the Americas.

Canadians have always been proud of our Atlantic heritage, which inspired our national institutions. We are also strongly conscious, as is Mexico, of the important economic dimension of being a Pacific nation. In addition, Canada feels a special responsibility for the careful management of its Arctic environment. But, today, we have also realized that there is a fourth component of Canada's geographic and historic situation, which we have been slower to develop: Canada as a country of the Americas.

Canada has a destiny to fulfil -- a destiny as a full partner in the Western Hemisphere. I think it's fair to say that Canadians, for many years, knew that we were physically present in the Americas, but did not truly feel part of them. Especially since the economic and political reforms that swept through Latin America in the 1980s, the realization grew that Canada should not -- in fact could not -- stand aloof from its Western Hemisphere neighbours.