

I believe we must dispel any impression that we are international opportunists looking only for short-term benefits. We should put aside arm's-length deals and get to know our counterparts in the region. This is where the Canada-Japan Business Co-operation Committee and the Canadian Committee of the Pacific Basic Economic Council (PBEC) have been so valuable. I look to them for leadership, and to provide inspiration for others.

Finally, I make a plea: a plea that you spend some time, if only implicitly, in introspection: balancing your specific interests in the region against those of others from different areas of business or parts of the country; assessing proposed action not only in terms of what is ideal, but also what is achievable.

In short, I am suggesting that the discussions at this Conference, to have some future applicability, must reflect some broad form of consensus. The results also must be realistic.

This Conference is based on the interesting if seldom-used approach of inviting Canadians to participate directly in the development of new directions for national activities abroad. For many of you this experience may help in the mapping out of better business strategies for the Pacific in the years ahead. For others, such as those participants from governments, it will help in the devising of updated and more effective policies across a range of related areas. For all, I know it will mean a heightened awareness of a new sense of neighbourhood.

Whatever this Conference means to you, I wish you the best as participants. I predict that this event is going to have significant value for Canadians and Canada generally, and a positive impact on our relationships in the Pacific. I for one will be looking forward to its results.