

# PLAYING HOST TO THE Americas

The Québec Summit is the culmination of a two-year series of hemispheric meetings and other events hosted by Canada. Here is a quick look at these events and their outcomes.



XXX General Assembly  
XXX Assemblée générale

XXX Assembleia General  
XXX Assembléia Geral

Session of the OAS General Assembly in Windsor, Ontario, June 5, 2000

Prime Minister Chrétien's wife Aline (front row centre, in red dress) poses with other participants in the Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government of the Americas, Ottawa, September 1999.

## OAS General Assembly

Last June 4 to 6, foreign ministers from throughout the Hemisphere came to Windsor, Ontario, for the 30th OAS General Assembly. They discussed 70 resolutions and a range of issues to do with democratic development and human security. The meeting helped shape the agenda that national leaders will discuss at the Third Summit of the Americas.

Participating in Windsor were 13 Canadian and 40 Latin American NGOs—the largest representation ever of civil society at a General Assembly. Their presence was recognition of the role played by non-governmental groups in achieving many OAS goals.

## FTAA Trade Ministers' Meeting

A major commitment of the Summit of the Americas process has been to complete negotiations on a Free Trade Area of the Americas by 2005. Canada chaired the first phase of the negotiations in 1998 and 1999, leading up to the FTAA Trade Ministers' Meeting in Toronto on November 3 and 4, 1999.

The FTAA process provides for the involvement of non-governmental parties. This is the first international trade negotiation process with a formal mechanism for non-governmental participation.



## Fifth Americas Business Forum

Immediately preceding the FTAA Trade Ministers' Meeting was the Fifth Americas Business Forum, again in Toronto, from November 1 to 3, 1999. It attracted over 800 business leaders from all 34 countries involved in the FTAA process.

The Forum was an opportunity for participants to make contacts and deals, and express their views on how to build a Free Trade Area of the Americas agreement.

## Ninth Conference of Spouses

The Conference of Spouses of Heads of State and Government of the Americas has roots going back to 1980. Since 1994, the event has drawn participants from throughout the Hemisphere. Ottawa was the site for the 1999 conference from September 29 to October 1, led by Aline Chrétien, wife of Canada's Prime Minister.

On the agenda in Ottawa were two topics: investing in children, and women's health. Innovations in 1999 were the participation of international co-operation agencies, and an NGO fair with two representatives per country. Each state demonstrated what it was doing on women's health and children's issues, and could see the initiatives under way elsewhere.

## Pan American Games

From July 23 to August 8, 1999, more than 5000 athletes under 42 flags took part in the XIII Pan American Games in Winnipeg. This was one of the largest sports competitions ever held in North America, surpassed only by the 1984 and 1996 Summer Olympics. ●—