

# Creating Prosperity

The ongoing Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) negotiations are an integral part of the larger Summit of the Americas process. With an agenda focused on creating prosperity, the proposed FTAA complements Summit initiatives aimed at strengthening democracy and realizing human potential. The FTAA is the most visible element of the Summit process, and its principal objective is to attain growth and development through enhanced economic integration in order to meet the Summit's broader goals.

## Labour and Employment

The FTAA talks are only a means to an end: the creation of jobs and prosperity throughout the Hemisphere. Within the context of the FTAA negotiations and beyond, Canada is committed to ensuring that the benefits of trade liberalization and economic growth are distributed equitably.

Canada is playing an important role in fulfilling the labour and employment commitments mandated by the Quebec City Summit Plan of Action. As Chair of the XII Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Labour (IACML) since October 2001, Canada has implemented a results-oriented Plan of Action that focuses on: promoting the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work; strengthening the capacity of labour ministries to implement labour laws and policies, assisting the smaller economies of the Hemisphere; and working towards a deeper understanding of, and agreement on, the labour dimensions of the Summit of the Americas process.

A milestone under Canada's leadership has been the unprecedented participation of employer and labour groups in the formulation and implementation of the IACML Plan of Action.

To fulfill its commitments, the IACML established two working groups: one to examine the labour dimensions of globalization and the other to find ways of building the capacity of labour ministries. Workshops have also been organized across the Americas to

address the impact of trade and economic integration on labour, non-traditional employment relationships, closing the digital divide, social security, and gender issues.

After having taken concrete measures towards improving working conditions in the Americas, Canada will hand over the chair of the IACML to Brazil in September 2003.

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