

We will be promoting a greater awareness of Asian countries in Canada by encouraging cultural and language studies - awareness of Japan and other nations which are part of the rich diversity of the Asia Pacific region.

We intend to promote a greater awareness of Canada in Asia Pacific, by supporting exchanges and Canadian studies programs; and

We will be pursuing an aggressive regional trade strategy, identifying specific market opportunities in Japan, the so-called 4 Tigers, India and elsewhere; and mounting promotional drives to translate those opportunities into exports.

But our Pacific personality goes beyond trade and investment. It is also about people. Fully 50% of our immigration now comes from Asia Pacific. By the year 2000, there will be one million more Canadians of Asian origin - a major force in our multicultural fabric; and a solid link across the Pacific.

To date, I have been focusing on Canada's continuing transformation into a global trader and a growing Pacific presence. But we also understand that the nations of Asia Pacific are currently undergoing an equally dramatic, if not even greater, change.

In fact, I would suggest it is in the changes taking place on both sides of the Pacific that our full potential lies. For I believe it is through trade liberalization in sectors such as food products that we can develop a mutually beneficial Trans-Pacific relationship based on comparative advantage.

Recent actions have shown that other trading partners, such as the United States, may exhibit impatience as they exert pressure to open Asian markets more fully, and more quickly. We understand and support their objectives. We do not support their methods.

Rather, we believe the answer to current Trans-Pacific problems lies in multilateral and regional cooperation - not bilateral confrontation. That is why we are placing so much emphasis on the Uruguay Round; and that is why we are extremely interested in supporting the development of a Pacific Rim forum and wholeheartedly support Prime Minister Hawke's call for a Ministerial Meeting later this year.

We see this initial meeting as an opportunity to enhance the sense of community and common purpose among nations of the region. We see it as the beginning of a process of identifying first, how we can work together to sustain growth, and second where collaboration and cooperation might be most beneficial, for instance, in resource management, transportation or telecommunications.

We hope that a Pacific Ministerial Forum might stimulate policy-oriented research in the region; and that organizations like the PECC could help Channel data and analysis to where it is more needed.

(And) we would look to the forum to impart political energy to the fostering of business linkages, with a potentially key role for the Pacific Basin Economic Council.

Should the dialogue be restricted to economics and trade? We think that the agenda of cooperation, by its nature, is a broad one. And we see no reason why the topics covered by Pacific Ministerial meetings could not eventually be extended to other areas, such as the environment.