

Given the magnitude of the bilateral relationship, the Government recognizes the particular importance of federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) coordination on Canada-US affairs. Since 2000, the Canadian Embassy has hosted annual meetings with provincial and territorial representatives to discuss key issues on the Canada-US agenda and to provide 'the view from Washington'. Over the past two years, the Government has maintained close contact with the provinces and territories on Canada-US security-related issues and developments related to the Smart Border Action Plan. FPT briefings were held in Ottawa on December 1, 2001 and January 17, 2002, with the exchanges updated in an August 14, 2002 teleconference, and a further FPT briefing on March 13, 2003. The Government also invited provincial and territorial representatives to attend relevant sessions of the annual meeting of Canada's US and Mexico Heads of Mission held in December 2002. In late February 2003, the Government began a series of consultations in provincial and territorial capitals to explore further means of enhancing the FPT partnership on Canada-US issues.

DFAIT is also working with provincial, territorial and municipal players to enhance Canada's advocacy efforts in the United States. DFAIT supports the participation of the provinces and territories in a number of sub-national institutions, such as the New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers Conference, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, the Council of State Governments, meetings of the Western Governors' Association and Western Premiers, and the National Governors' Association. In January 2003, a delegation from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities addressed the US Conference of Mayors in Washington on the disruption caused in their communities by the softwood lumber trade dispute. Their presence contributed greatly to the Americans' understanding of the implications of this bilateral trade irritant. Provincial and territorial governments, through their own advocacy, enjoy a significant presence in Mexico. In addition to promoting specific trade and cultural interests, these partners play a useful role in furthering Canada-Mexico governance cooperation, particularly on issues such as decentralization.

In the area of trade and investment policy, the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee on Trade (C-Trade) is an officials-level forum which meets at least quarterly to exchange information, share perspectives and develop positions on a range of international trade policy issues, including negotiations. In addition, Canadian Ministers responsible for trade meet at least once a year, as do their deputies. The Government regularly shares key policy documents with the provinces and territories. Almost on a weekly basis, conference calls are also organized to provide timely reporting after key negotiation sessions, to discuss trade policy issues and strategies, as well as to solicit input from our provincial and territorial partners.

Finally, the Government also encourages provincial and territorial governments to

