



THIS YEAR'S MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AWARD for Foreign Policy Excellence and for Consular Excellence, were bestowed on January 30 to the Canadian Embassy in Kabul Team and the Iraq Hostage Team, respectively. The first award recognizes outstanding individual or collective contributions to Canada, Canadians and Canadian foreign policy. The second recognizes outstanding consular services to Canadians at home and abroad. The Kabul Team was recognized for its exceptional commitment toward attaining Canada's objectives in Afghanistan as well as for having contributed to the development and elaboration of Canada's policy towards Afghanistan under exceptionally difficult circumstances. A citation was given to Heidi Hulan for her key role in promoting the concept of Responsibility to Protect and ensuring its endorsement by world leaders at the 2005 UN World Summit. The recipient of the MINA Award for Consular Excellence was the Iraq Hostage Team, which managed the release of two Canadian Christian Peacemaker hostages who were held for 118 days in Iraq (see pp. 13-15 for first person account of the ordeal). The Iraq Hostage Team included representatives of various Government of Canada agencies and departments who worked tirelessly to ensure the safe release of the two Canadian hostages.

JANET DERONZYNSKI, TRADE COMMISSIONER for Canadian Wine, Spirits and Beer (BMM), has been recognized for her contribution to the Canadian wine industry at an awards ceremony in Niagara. As one of five recipients, Janet was awarded a "Promote the Promoters Award" by the Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) at Brock University. Janet is responsible for overseeing the department's Canadian Wine Initiative (CWI), as well as for working with industry to develop and coordinate an international market development strategy for the sector. Recipients are nominated by the grape and wine industry, with winners chosen by an industry panel under the auspices and approval of CCOVI. Janet was acknowledged at the annual Cuvee Gala Awards ceremony held in Niagara on February 29, 2008.



ON MARCH 5, Prime Minister Stephen Harper presented the Public Service of Canada's Outstanding Achievement Award for 2007 to DFAIT's own Denis Comeau, currently Inspector General of DFAIT. Denis was among only five to receive the award. He was recognized for his efforts in Thailand during the December 2004 tsunami. Denis' first thoughts when interviewed were to recognize the efforts of all the individuals who worked so diligently and tirelessly during the difficult ordeal. "This was a team effort," he noted. "I would like to thank everyone, from those who were with me in Phuket, to my dedicated embassy staff and their spouses in Bangkok to all of those who were involved at headquarters and who also worked 24/7 on this file. While it is of course very gratifying to receive this sort of recognition, I am also conscious of the fact that this is testament to everyone's hard work." Denis noted that the Public Service Award and other similar awards are important for the motivation and recognition that they bring to both individuals and groups.

MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE DAVID EMERSON on February 4 held a special event to recognize the efforts of two groups who successfully concluded free trade negotiations with Peru and with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Noting the important contributions these two agreements would bring to Canadian companies and to Canada, Mr. Emerson thanked both teams for their tireless and ultimately, successful work. To learn more about these negotiations, see "Bridging the Divide" and "When the Stars Align".

