

*working groups are being used successfully as catalysts in the promotion of international investment and trade projects*

Canadian Education Centres in eleven cities overseas has directed significant numbers of students to Canada. For example, since the opening of a Centre in Seoul in 1993, student visa applications from Korea increased from 800 at that time to 8000 in 1996. Apart from the immediate economic benefit of enrolling students from abroad, there are long term benefits from the strong links with Canada that students develop when they are here. They often return as immigrants and investors later on.

## **Coordination through Sector Working Groups**

As part of this strategy, interdepartmental working groups will be used more extensively to guide the promotion of investment from Asia in a systematic way. This is happening in some sectors such as semiconductors, where a strong campaign has been launched to define Canadian interests, to encourage five or six regions in Canada to prepare suitable sites and documentation and to promote the establishment of chip fabrication plants in those regions by making representations to selected firms in Japan, Korea and Taiwan. The ad hoc working group assembled to organize the September 1996 Keidanren mission to Canada resulted in excellent programs to present business opportunities in processed food and information technologies. The success of that mission has resulted in follow-up activities such as visits of sector specific journalists and the arrangement of seminars in Canada and Japan and much closer liaison with regional offices, provinces, municipalities and sectoral associations.

Similarly, working groups are being used successfully as catalysts in the promotion of international investment and trade projects in aerospace, automotive parts, life sciences and mining.

## **Implementation**

Implementation involves fulfilling the objectives and meeting the key challenges for each country through a systematic program of events and activities. A corporate liaison program is the cornerstone of the investment development program at each Canadian mission abroad, supplemented by "back-to-

back" visits to subsidiaries in Canada (and, in the case of Japan at least, visits to regional controlling offices in the USA).

The Corporate Liaison Program consists of formal meetings between Heads of Mission or senior staff at Canadian posts abroad and executives of foreign companies. An effective corporate liaison program for a country like Japan, that already has many subsidiaries in Canada, includes calls on Canadian (or North American) affiliates of foreign companies followed by calls on head offices in the home country using the information and intelligence gathered from the subsidiary. The objectives are to develop a dialogue with selected firms in order to: gather intelligence on the company's investment plans; gauge their interest in and knowledge of Canada; uncover perceived barriers to investing in and doing business with Canada; provide information on Canada to facilitate investments and business partnerships; and influence their views on Canada and important Canadian policy positions. The program also helps to develop long-term relationships with these companies before an investment decision is imminent.

Another feature of the strategy is the addition of investment-related responsibilities to some Trade Commissioners and Commercial Officers in sectors related to investment targets. For example, in Hong Kong, officers currently handling trade in textiles/clothing, high technology products, life sciences, agri-food, and natural resources will receive training in investment promotion techniques and spend more time soliciting investment in their sectors.

Support from the headquarters of DFAIT and Industry Canada in the form of timely and current literature, success stories, newsletters, sectoral investment promotional kits, the servicing of investor enquiries, the development of training courses, cooperation with other government departments, the provinces and the private sector is also an essential component of the strategy. Recent successful examples include food projects with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), mining seminars with Natural Resources Canada (NRCan), cooperation with the Industrial Research Assistance Program (IRAP) of the National Research Council (NRC), the Medical Research Council etc. Industrial Commissioners from Canadian municipalities are also an essential component of the strategy and