

## **Canada–Czech Republic Relations**

- Canada and Czechoslovakia established consular services in each other's country in 1920 and appointed ambassadors in 1942. Canada recognized the newly formed Czech Republic in 1993. The two nations have forged new political and commercial links since the Czech Republic's transition from a Communist regime to a democratic state.
- President Vaclav Klaus made an official visit to Canada in 1997 while he was prime minister. Former president Vaclav Havel made two official visits to Canada, the first in 1990 as President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic and the second in 1999 as President of the Czech Republic.
- The Speaker of the Senate led a Canadian delegation to the Czech Republic in 2002 for meetings on NATO, on enlarging the European Union, and on the floods that had struck the Czech Republic that summer. In 2001, Canada's Human Resources Development Minister visited Prague to sign a social security agreement.
- Canada strongly supports NATO enlargement and was the first country to ratify the Czech Republic's membership. Along with Hungary and Poland, the Czech Republic was formally welcomed into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1999. The Czech Republic hosted the NATO Summit in November 2002, which Canada's Prime Minister attended.
- The Czech Republic has successfully participated in a number of NATO operations. A Czech battalion served with Canadian peacekeepers in Bosnia.
- The Czech Republic will join the European Union in May 2004. In a two-day referendum on June 14 and 15, 2003, 77 per cent of Czech voters approved the proposal.
- Canada and the Czech Republic have reinforced their relationship through participation in international forums such as the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the World Trade Organization.
- In January 2003, legislative requirements from a May 2001 social security agreement came into force, enabling people who have lived or worked in Canada and the Czech Republic to more easily qualify for social security benefits from either or both countries.