

# Marc Lortie

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photo: DFAIT

scaling heights. He has held a series of diplomatic positions, was press secretary to then Prime Minister Brian Mulroney from 1987 to 1989, and served as the Prime Minister's personal representative for La Francophonie. From 1993 to 1997, while Canada's Ambassador to Chile, he oversaw a major expansion in Canada-Chile relations, culminating in a free trade accord and agreements on environmental and labour co-operation. He was named the Prime Minister's personal representative in January 2000, and combines this with his other responsibilities as DFAIT's Senior Co-ordinator for Federal-Provincial Relations.

As representative of the Prime Minister, Marc Lortie has overall responsibility for development of the Summit agenda, and for the massive logistics involved in hosting a gathering of 34 national leaders. He travels widely throughout the Americas to meet with the representatives of other countries and hemispheric organizations.

"Our major challenge," he says, "is to present to the Heads of State and Government a concrete Plan of Action that all countries can implement. We are working toward decisions that truly build on the progress from

**"Sherpas" have a crucial role in the lead-up to any summit. Like the**

legendary guides who help explorers conquer Himalayan peaks, diplomatic sherpas lay out the path to productive consensus among leaders at a summit meeting.

On the upward climb to Québec City's Summit of the Americas, Marc Lortie is Canada's Sherpa and Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's personal representative. He is accustomed to

## PROFILES IN

*Mapping the path to a*

**Organizing the 2001 Summit of the Americas is quite a challenge. Many elements have to come together smoothly; the leaders who attend have to be able to focus on priorities and getting results. Only then**

previous summits and that address the daily concerns of our fellow citizens of the Americas."

Marc Lortie's extensive contacts with civil society groups have been an important element in his work, reflecting Canada's commitment to an open, inclusive Summit process. He is proud of the dialogue and openness that have marked the preparatory discussions.

"Part of our commitment to a successful Summit is to engage all sectors of Canadian society in becoming aware of our place in the Hemisphere," he notes. "I took it as a priority to meet with as many groups as possible to help achieve that goal, and to listen to their concerns. I am very pleased that we have been open to their views and that we have been able to bring them up to date on what the Summit can achieve for all citizens of the Hemisphere. We may not agree on every point, of course, but the dialogue has helped our government, these groups and the Summit itself." ●

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien confers with International Trade Minister Pierre Pettigrew (left) and Marc Lortie (centre), the PM's personal representative for the 2001 Summit of the Americas, before the Canada-Central America Heads of Government meeting in Guatemala City, September 2000.

