

CANADIAN INTERESTS

Canada has from the beginning worked to develop APEC's activities in a way that would contribute to our global objectives, such as increasing prosperity, pursuing economic adjustment and liberalizing trade. We have also sought to utilize APEC as a means of collaboration in specific sectors, such as telecommunications, marine conservation and tourism, where a regional approach seemed feasible. In principle, we have tried to steer APEC's work as much as possible toward a dialogue on policy issues and away from operationally oriented and Official Development Assistance-style activities.

We have placed greatest emphasis on the discussion within APEC of economic and trade issues, which we view as APEC's core. Indeed, since its inception, APEC's highest priority objective has been the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the MTN, and Canada has been active in using the APEC forum to that end. Canada hosted a meeting of APEC trade ministers in Vancouver in September 1990, devoted solely to the Uruguay Round. We have also participated in the Informal Group on Trade Liberalization, and have supported Australia's proposal to establish an Eminent Persons' Group to develop a trade policy "vision" for the region.

APEC's ad hoc group on economic trends and issues, a Canadian initiative designed to enhance mutual awareness of economic developments and trends in the region, remains a high priority. The key objective for Canada at the Bangkok ministerial meeting will be to keep the momentum behind this initiative and build on the results of the August 10-11 meeting in Tokyo of the ad hoc group.

Canada has also been active in APEC's sectorally focused activities, which now includes 10 working groups. Of particular interest to Canada are Marine Resource Conservation (oceanic pollution), for which Canada is project leader, Human Resources Development, Telecommunications, Transportation and Energy.

Canada strongly supports the creation of an institutional mechanism for APEC that reinforces our view of what APEC is about -- namely, a group of economies with profound linkages and shared interests. In Seoul, Canada outlined a number of ideas for a possible approach to APEC's institutional development. The aim was to ensure that whatever mechanism was agreed on, it would play an active role in stimulating dialogue among APEC members and in providing APEC's work with a solid base of analytical support.

With the three Chinas effectively integrated into APEC and the issue of institutionalization resolved in principle, Canada has supported the widely shared view that APEC requires a period of consolidation before it undergoes another rapid expansion. However, we have also been a leading proponent that Mexico should be admitted to APEC soon, in light of the increased level of economic integration with North America that will result from the NAFTA. We are working with the U.S.A. to obtain agreement on language for the Bangkok Ministerial Statement that will support early Mexican membership in APEC.