

Several recent events have highlighted the vigour of the France-Canada economic relationship: (1) the 10th meeting of the Economic Joint Commission in Ottawa set up a number of working groups to promote co-operation between companies in the information technology and multimedia sectors; (2) renewed work in the Joint Scientific Commission is stimulating further exchanges between public and private sector researchers in such fields as forestry, oceanography, agriculture, medical research and the social sciences. Scientific relations will also receive a boost from the access to major EU research programs that Canadian firms and laboratories now enjoy; (3) the French Prime Minister visited Canada with a business delegation that included a number of potentially important investors; and (4) in January 1997, Prime Minister Chrétien, accompanied by Industry Minister Manley and 25 Canadian CEOs, visited France and signed the Declaration of Enhanced Partnership.

C. Culture

Canada and France have long-standing cultural ties that reflect our historical and linguistic affinities. The two countries share a determination to resist the homogenizing thrust of American popular culture and a willingness to support our own cultural industries. Bilateral exchanges in the area of the audio-visual arts have given rise to film co-production agreements. In 1995-96, for instance, 44 feature and TV films were produced under these agreements, for a total value of \$335 million. Some 69% of Canada's co-productions in the audio-visual sector involved a French partner. Canada and France are the two main sponsors of the international French-language TV-5



The Canadian Embassy's Cultural Centre in Paris.

channel, and have signed co-operation agreements in the museum and national archives sector. During Prime Minister Juppé's visit in June 1996, a declaration was signed to encourage co-operation and exchanges in multimedia cultural materials, paving the way for Canada to participate for the first time, in 1997, at the major multimedia fair, MILIA. Also in early 1997, Canada was the featured country at EXPOLANGUES in recognition of its excellence in language teaching.

The Canadian Embassy's Cultural Centre in Paris was reopened in early 1997. It now features a "New Media Centre" that will bring increased vitality to our cultural ties. The promotion of Canadian culture, artists, entrepreneurs and new technologies in France and throughout Europe is a key element of Canada's cultural diplomacy and trade development strategy.

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