

The Government of Canada has engaged a number of governments in the region through bilateral visits to exchange best practices and lessons learned in areas such as land claims, economic development, Aboriginal justice, bilingual education and connectivity. The Government of Canada continues to work with other states and Indigenous peoples to prepare the Draft American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The Government of Canada also hosted the second annual Connecting Aboriginal Canadians Forum in March 2003. Fifty Indigenous representatives from Latin America were present at the event and had an opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned in the area of connectivity with Aboriginal and government representatives from Canada.

Canada has meanwhile promoted the expansion of trade and economic development, and the fostering of economic, social and cultural cooperation between Canadian and other Indigenous communities of the Americas. In particular, in January 2003 Canada launched the Indigenous Peoples Partnership Programme (IPPP); this will provide up to CDN\$10 million over a four-year pilot period to support development partnerships between Indigenous peoples in Canada and those in other countries, initially in the Americas region. The IPPP has the following goals: to increase the development capacity of Indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean, and of the entities dealing with them; to increase the international development expertise of Canadian Aboriginal entities; and to foster sustainable partnerships between Aboriginal peoples in Canada and Indigenous peoples in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Fostering a Culturally Diverse Hemisphere

Since the Quebec City Summit, Canada has played a leading role in advancing cultural policies in the Americas.

As part of the implementation of the Quebec City Plan of Action, Canada has hosted two Meetings of Experts on Culture—one in Vancouver, British Columbia, in March 2002 and one in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in March 2003. These seminars brought together representatives of governments, multilateral institutions, civil society organizations and cultural industries from Canada and the rest of the Hemisphere to exchange views and discuss and share strategies that would contribute to the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity in the Americas.

In close partnership with Colombia, Canada played a leading role in preparations for the first Hemispheric Meeting of Ministers of Culture, held in Cartagena, Colombia, in July 2002.

The Summit of the Americas process helped advance the fight against performance-enhancing drug use by competitive athletes, facilitating the first meeting of Ministers of Sport in the Americas in Brazil in April 2003.



The Summit process has helped Canada contribute to the Hemispheric cultural diversity agenda and secured a leadership role for Canada in key policy areas.

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