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# news release

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## MACLAREN ENCOURAGES EFFORTS TO BOOST CANADIAN EDUCATION EXPORTS IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

The Honourable Roy MacLaren, Minister for International Trade, said today that Canada must step up efforts to promote its high-quality educational products and services in the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. MacLaren was responding to a study released today by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade that highlighted the important political and economic benefits generated by international students in this country. This includes an estimated \$1.5-billion-a-year contribution to the Canadian economy, accounting for 19 000 jobs for Canadians.

He expressed concern over recent trends identified in the study that show Canada losing ground to countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, which are making major marketing efforts to attract well-qualified students from Asian countries.

"We must heed the wake-up call," said Mr. MacLaren.

"International education represents a vital opportunity for Canada to become better known to the next generation of Asian decision-makers. The economies of the region are the fastest growing in the world. Canada's economic growth and competitiveness increasingly will be linked to this region."

In this context, Mr. MacLaren also announced that his department will sponsor a conference on Canadian education and the Asia-Pacific region in Vancouver from March 9 to 11. Canadian Education and the Asia-Pacific Region: A Vision for the Future will invite representatives of federal and provincial governments, academic institutions, education associations and non-government organizations to develop a five-year strategy for marketing educational products and services in the Asia-Pacific region.

Copies of the education marketing study, *International Education: The Asia Pacific Region and Canada*, can be obtained by calling