

Office of the
Prime Minister



Cabinet du
Premier ministre

In today's fast-paced and increasingly global economy, the Asia-Pacific has emerged as a highly dynamic economic region of growing importance to Canada.

Canada, as a Pacific nation and a founding participant in the 18-member Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, has an important window on this exciting part of the world.

In addition to helping open APEC markets, APEC is introducing Canadian businesses to decision makers and potential partners throughout Asia. As such, APEC is a vital tool in the Government's strategy for economic growth and job creation at home.

The first international meeting that I attended as Prime Minister was the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting at Blake Island, USA in 1993. The enthusiasm for trade liberalization and economic growth that I sensed at Blake Island was confirmed at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Bogor, Indonesia the following year, where Leaders established a timetable to achieve free and open trade across the Pacific. At the most recent APEC Economic Leaders' meeting, in Osaka in November 1995, Leaders adopted an Action Agenda that will break down barriers to the free flow of goods, services and investment across the region's borders.

Canada will see the Asia-Pacific world come to its doorstep in 1997 when we chair the APEC process. The APEC Ministerial and Summit meetings will take place in Vancouver in November 1997. These events will cap an unprecedented year of activities that will emphasize Canada's Asia-Pacific connections. Taking place across Canada, these activities will provide a unique opportunity to showcase our commitment to strengthening ties with key partners in the region.

The success of our "Team Canada" missions to China in 1994, and to India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia in 1996, demonstrates what Canadians can achieve when we unite in a common purpose. I invite all Canadians to work together to make 1997 an unforgettable year for Canada in the Asia-Pacific.

Jean Chrétien

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