



## **Premiers Release Strategy on the Global Economy; Plan trade mission to Asia**

**VANCOUVER, July 22, 2011** -- Premiers today released a strategy entitled *Canada in the Global Economy*. They also announced that, within 12 months, Premiers will pursue a joint Council of the Federation mission to Asia with the federal government to advance an ambitious international trade agenda for Canada.

As committed international actors with increasingly sophisticated global connections and capabilities, provinces and territories are an integral part of any international strategy for Canada, particularly given their responsibility for many of the matters addressed in modern trade agreements. The four-point strategy released today by Premiers outlines specific actions to harness the common and individual strengths of provinces and territories and help position Canada strongly in the global economy:

1. Ensure a robust and forward-thinking Canadian trade and investment agenda is in place with appropriate attention to markets including the United States, the European Union (EU), Asia, as well as other emerging markets.
2. Maintain and expand Canada's physical infrastructure and gateway policy to accommodate and encourage the flow of people, services and goods.
3. Facilitate the movement of people – including tourists, immigrants, international students, and business people – and capitalize on the opportunities available to Canada through globally connected Canadians and the linkages they can create between Canada and the world.
4. Build and deepen productive relationships with Canada's trading partners by becoming better educated about international cultures, economies and global connections – and better educate the international community about Canada.

At their meeting, Premiers emphasized the need to intensify efforts in Asia by better promoting Canada and the provinces and territories and realizing economic opportunities for all of Canada.

Premiers agreed that we must better leverage our gateways and land-based borders, plentiful natural resources, value-added manufactured goods, and our broad services sector, to strengthen our relationships with Asia. Canadians' immense personal, cultural and business connections, throughout Asia, coupled with Canada's diversity are also a unique advantage.

Timely development of strategic infrastructure and policies necessary to facilitate trade are crucial if Canada is to compete successfully in Asian markets. Premiers agreed to

support and encourage the development and expansion of infrastructure, ports, gateway, and transportation initiatives focusing on our competitive advantages.

Premiers recognized that Asia represents a critical missing pillar in Canada's trade and investment framework and called on the federal government to enhance access for goods, services and citizens between Canada and Asian markets with a high priority to China, India, Korea, Japan and Singapore.

Currently, Canada has no trade agreements with Asia. The federal government must set a new and ambitious trade and liberalization agenda to guide Canada's engagement with Asian countries. Premiers encourage the federal government to achieve the Canada-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with the participation of provinces and territories.

Reflecting the importance of two-way trade with Asia to Canada's economic prosperity, the trade mission to Asia will focus on China and India and highlight key sectors of importance to provinces and territories. Building on the federal government's commitment to work with the provinces and territories to advance an ambitious international trade agenda for Canada, Premiers invite the Prime Minister to join them in making this important mission a success.

Premiers noted that this year has been designated as the Year of India in Canada by the Government of India with activities taking place in several provinces. This initiative offers Canadians an opportunity to know more about India, its diversity, its culture, traditions and future. Such initiatives build bridges and enhance relationships and understanding between India and all parts of Canada and illustrate Canada's place in the world as a globally significant market.

*Canada in the Global Economy* stresses the importance of taking advantage of the Beyond the Border Working Group and the Regulatory Cooperation Council to improve upon the mature trade, economic and energy relationship between Canada and the US. Premiers believe that provinces and territories need to have active and meaningful participation in this important initiative. Premiers will continue their discussion on Canada-US Relations when they meet with Washington Governor Christine Gregoire, immediate past chair of the National Governors Association, and Gary Doer, Canada's Ambassador to the United States.

Premiers discussed progress on the negotiations with the European Union to complete a Canada/EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). An ambitious agreement would enhance Canada's access to the European market. A joint Canada-EU study estimates that by 2014, there will be a positive economic impact of \$12 billion for Canada (0.77% of GDP) and \$18 billion for the EU. In recognition that many of the areas covered by the CETA would potentially be under provincial and territorial jurisdiction, the federal government has supported the direct participation of provinces and territories in the international negotiations. Premiers stressed the importance of provincial and territorial participation in international trade negotiations affecting areas of provincial and territorial jurisdiction. Premiers support concluding the CETA negotiations by 2012.

Premiers also recognize that there are many other opportunities and markets important to Canadians and Canadian businesses and committed to continuing to work together to build relationships with other key global markets such as Mexico and the Americas. Premiers noted that Canada's diversity and infrastructure also offer advantages to accessing these markets.

Premiers reiterated their call for an effective partnership between federal, provincial and territorial governments to ensure the best outcomes for immigrants and communities to build a prosperous Canada. Canada's immigration programs must be adaptable and responsive to diverse regional needs and demographic pressures. Provinces and territories are in the best position to assess the needs of their communities and regional economies and integrate settlement and integration services with other human services including education, health, social services, and labour market services.

Premiers agreed that growth in immigration levels for 2012 and beyond is essential to create a flexible, responsive and effective economic immigration program. Provinces and territories must have an equal role with the federal government and call on the federal government to remove arbitrary application ceilings in the Provincial Nominee Program combined with higher levels in the Federal Skilled Worker Program and jointly set overall immigration levels that will sustain economic growth. Jurisdictions must also have a direct role in managing federally funded settlement and integration programming. A number of Premiers expressed an interest in building on the success of devolved models in Québec, British Columbia and Manitoba. Premiers would be pleased to work with the federal government on how to address processing backlogs and the capacity to absorb immigrants into provinces and territories.

Québec is already responsible for selecting immigrants and settlement services in Québec under the Canada-Québec Accord.

Premiers also endorsed an International Education Marketing Action Plan, which supports the goals of *Canada in the Global Economy*. The Action Plan identifies opportunities for federal-provincial-territorial collaboration on marketing aiming at:

- Increasing the number of international students studying in Canada;
- Increasing Canada's share of the international student market;
- Providing more opportunities for Canadian students to study abroad as appropriate ;  
and
- Retaining a greater number of international student graduates as permanent residents.

The recent federal budget committed \$10 million over two years to promote our broadly recognized quality education systems. Premiers welcome this commitment and encourage the federal government to assist provinces and territories in the implementation of their International Education Marketing Plan.

Provinces and territories will work with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to explore ways to enhance visa processing operations in key markets building on the success of the Student Partners Program. In 2008, international students spent \$6.5 billion in Canada and created over 83,000 jobs. By 2025, the global demand for international education is predicted to quadruple from 1.8 million to 7.2 million students.

*Canada in the Global Economy*, as well as the International Education Marketing Action Plan, can be found at [www.councilofthefederation.ca](http://www.councilofthefederation.ca).

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**For more information:**

**Nina Chiarelli**

Government of British Columbia

250-387-0793

Cell: 250-216-8426

[nina.chiarelli@gov.bc.ca](mailto:nina.chiarelli@gov.bc.ca)