

Canada-Korea special partnership strengthened by new bilateral agreements

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Seoul, South Korea

On day two of their Team Canada 1997 mission to South Korea, Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Canada's First Ministers today witnessed the signing of agreements on telecommunications and social security during a meeting with Korean President Kim Young-sam. Canada and Korea also agreed to begin market access negotiations on telecommunications and related equipment to be concluded in 1997.

"Our Special Partnership has been a driving force behind stronger Canada-Korea bilateral and economic relations," said the Prime Minister. "Today's announcements on telecommunications bode well, as they will help further open the Korean market to our products and enhance opportunities for Canadian and Korean businesses."

The two new agreements are:

- a Mutual Recognition Arrangement (MRA) to facilitate trade in telecommunications, radio and information technology equipment, which will ensure the mutual acceptance of each country's test results for regulatory purposes. The MRA will facilitate the regulatory approval of equipment and will allow exporters to complete testing procedures in Canada. Canada will pursue the negotiations on market access on the basis of reciprocity, transparency and non-discrimination.
- a Social Security Agreement which will ensure the continuity of Canada Pension Plan coverage when a Canadian is posted to Korea for up to five years. It also ensures that the employee and his or her employer are exempt from contributing to the Korean social security system during this period.

The Prime Minister also announced today that Radar Hill, Canada's Pacific Rim National Park, will be renamed "Kap'yong Hill" in recognition of Canada's military contribution to the United Nation's intervention force to Korea (1950-1953). In particular, it marks Canada's heroic efforts in the battle for Kap'yong Hill, a significant engagement for Canadian forces during the Korean conflict.