

Minister of International Trade and
Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway



Ministre du Commerce international et
ministre de la porte d'entrée de l'Asie-Pacifique

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0G2

The Honourable L'honorable
Stockwell Day

Dear Participants:

On behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), I am pleased to greet the participants of Synergy III, which this year addresses two of Canada's largest trade partners for educational services: China and India. The enhancement of educational linkages between Canada and these two countries entails sustained engagement of all stakeholders and the support of the public and private sectors.

On my visit to India in January, I had the honour of opening the trade office in Hyderabad and now, with eight offices currently located throughout the country, DFAIT's network in India ranks as its second largest globally in terms of the number of offices. This is just one of the many examples of the increasing Canadian engagement in India, which is firmly rooted in the vibrant Indo-Canadian community and strong historical ties between the two countries. The Government of Canada has identified India as an important trade partner, due to its rapidly growing economy and the opportunities presented by the sheer size of its marketplace. Innovations in science and technology have greatly increased the demand for higher education in India, and today a growing number of both Canadian and Indian education institutions are showing a greater degree of interest and appetite for bilateral academic collaboration.

Similarly, in April 2009 while visiting China, I launched new trade offices in Chengdu and Shenzhen, remarking the enormous potential and Canadian interest in engaging with one of the world's fastest growing economies. We have seen a tremendous deepening of the bonds that link Canada and China over the previous almost 40 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Currently, there are more than one million Canadians of Chinese ancestry and over 42,500 Chinese students—representing the largest group of international students in Canada.

International students turn to Canadian schools as a source of knowledge, innovation and creativity. In fact, international students are attending Canadian institutions in record numbers, over 175,000 per year—more than doubling their enrolment levels in the last decade. More than half these students come from Asia.

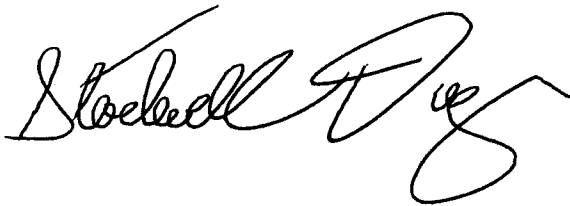
International students represent an ever increasing proportion of post-secondary enrolment in Canada and are a major boon to the Canadian economy, injecting upwards of \$6.5 billion to the Canadian economy every year. Chinese students spent over \$1.3 billion dollars on Canadian educational services in 2008—making education Canada's number one export to China. Similarly, Indian students spent over \$225 million on Canadian educational services; education is now Canada's fourth largest export sector to India.

Canada

December 2009 will see the first coordinated Canadian recruitment initiative of PhD students in India and China. While seeking to attract the best and brightest graduate students to Canadian institutions, these students will earn postgraduate degrees which, in turn, may enhance the capacity of the Chinese and Indian education systems. These students will also be eligible to partake in the recently launched Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarship program, which offers 500 scholarships in the areas of sciences, humanities, natural sciences, engineering and health.

It is with a great sense of encouragement that I see these two increasingly important markets being discussed together at Synergy III. This is a unique opportunity to share knowledge and experiences gained and applicable to these two education giants; to enhance cooperation and collaboration in existing relationships; and to establish new and innovative partnerships.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stockwell Day". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "D" at the end.

Hon. Stockwell Day
Minister of International Trade and
Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway