

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE

ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGES (ACCC), ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES OF CANADA (AUCC), CANADIAN BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION (CBIE) & CANADIAN MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS (CME)

We believe that one of the best ways to prepare Canada for the future is to prepare our college and university graduates for participation in the international community and global knowledge-based economy.

Research shows that Canadian college and university students who spend a semester or academic year abroad are better equipped than others to participate in the workforce in a range of fields. They possess second and third language skills, in-depth knowledge of how other societies perform research and conduct business, flexibility and adaptability – qualities that are not only desirable in our skilled professionals but, increasingly, essential.

Canada's private sector and education sector agree that more needs to be done to provide our post-secondary students with access to cross-border educational experiences.

We therefore urge the Government of Canada and all of the political parties to commit to making investments that increase the number of our college and university students who can participate in international education opportunities. Currently less than 1% of our students do so and surveys consistently indicate that the major impediment is financial.

Leading OECD nations are moving in this direction. Their governments recognize the significance of providing international education opportunities and are dedicating substantial resources to study abroad for their citizens. Canada must not be left to fall further behind its competitor nations in using international education as a strategic investment of foreign and domestic policy to create future political, business and research linkages and to promote international understanding.

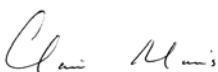
Canada's prosperity depends on increasing our participation in the international marketplace and diversifying our trade relationships. We must prepare our college and university students by investing in international education. As signaled by G8 leaders at the 2006 Summit, we must involve more young Canadians in studying and working abroad so that they develop international understanding, intercultural expertise and international competencies, which will enable Canada in the years ahead to connect, participate, contribute and compete in the global marketplace.

Urgent action is required. We seek government commitment. We are prepared to work with the Government of Canada and all of our political parties and representatives to make it happen.

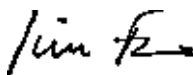
Sincerely,



Gerry Brown
President
ACCC



Claire Morris
President
AUCC



Jim Fox
President
CBIE/BCEI



Hon. Perrin Beatty
President & CEO
CME/MEC



-January 2007