

I am very much looking forward to joining the Prime Minister during his January visit.

It will mark my fourth visit to Indonesia in a period of 15 months.

Team Canada's mission to Indonesia will cement our expanding economic ties by helping to advance many of the technological, natural resources and human resources development initiatives that many of you here today are engaged in actively.

The Prime Minister will also open the new Canadian Education Centre in Jakarta during this visit. The Centre, which will promote Canada as a destination for Indonesian students seeking post-secondary and tertiary education training abroad, will contribute further to expanding people-to-people linkages between our countries.

As Indonesians learn more about Canada and Canadians come to Indonesia in increasing numbers, we shall increase the understanding of the similarities between us and appreciate more the cultural distinctiveness of our societies.

If we are to see our bilateral relations grow and flourish in the years ahead, it is linkages such as these - Indonesians studying in Canada, Canadian alumni in Indonesia sharing their experiences with colleagues, Canadians studying in Indonesia - that will bridge geographic distances and bring us closer together.

We are already important partners in the global economy and in the fast-growing Asia-Pacific region. We look to each other, as like-minded interlocutors, to work together in multilateral and regional forums, ranging from the United Nations to the new World Trade Organization, ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] and APEC.

We share a commitment to increased openness in the world trading system; as signatories to the World Trade Organization we are both proponents of accelerated global trade and investment liberalization.

It is in the World Trade Organization where we both, as export-led economies dependent on an open trading system, seek to reinforce the international commitment to increased market liberalization, improved access for our products and services, and co-operation in trade and investment facilitation.

We both subscribe fully to the vision articulated by APEC leaders in Bogor one year ago, committing member economies to free trade in the Asia-Pacific region by 2020.