

Introduction

The Team Canada Mission to South and Southeast Asia from January 8 to 20 will strengthen trade and investment ties with some of the world's fastest-growing economies. The federal, provincial and territorial governments and more than 300 representatives of Canadian business and educational institutions are working together as Team Canada to promote trade and investment, and strengthen growth and job creation in Canada.

The mission will visit India, Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia. All are experiencing rapid growth and have requirements for continued development that Canadians are well positioned commercially to supply.

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, and other First Ministers, Minister for International Trade Roy MacLaren and Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) Raymond Chan have shown in the past — as they did during the 1994 mission to China — that by leading a well co-ordinated and determined team, they can help secure more economic opportunities for Canadians in international markets.

The federal government has three key objectives during the mission:

- To promote trade and investment between Canadian firms and South and Southeast Asian partners, encouraging where possible the conclusion of business contracts, especially in the fields of transport, information technology and telecommunications, energy, agri-food and financial, environmental and educational services.
- To demonstrate Canada's commitment to sustainable development through support for Canadian development projects and Canadian-designed technologies that assist equitable economic growth while protecting and sustaining the natural environment.
- To market Canadian educational services with the aim of attracting more international scholars to Canadian educational institutions and establishing important people-to-people links that will foster economic partnerships between Canada and South and Southeast Asian countries in the future.

The mission is expected to further enhance Canada's international trade performance. Canadian exports have risen approximately 20 per cent in each of the last two years and have accounted for a significant portion of the 500,000 jobs created since October 1993. Business agreements reached during this mission are expected to further improve Canada's employment situation and growth.