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Canada committed to increased economic co-operation with ASEAN

"Since the inception of ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) nearly 16 years ago we have been impressed by its growth not only as a force for economic and social progress but as a significant factor for peace and stability," stated Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs Allan J. MacEachen, opening the inaugural meeting of the Canada-ASEAN Joint Co-operation Committee (JCC) in Ottawa, April 26.

"Convinced therefore," he continued, "of ASEAN's own contribution to regional peace and development, Canada is committed to increased economic co-operation with the Association."

Co-chaired by Canada and the ASEAN, the JCC was established under the ASEAN-Canada Economic Co-operation Agreement which came into force June 1, 1982. Its aim is to promote and review various areas of co-operation envisaged under the agreement, including commercial co-operation, industrial co-operation

and development co-operation. The committee will normally meet once a year.

The JCC meeting in Ottawa, co-chaired by Ambassador Sime D. Hidalgo of the Philippines and Assistant Under-Secretary for External Affairs, Asia and the Pacific, M.D. Copithorne, was attended by 43 delegates from the capitals of the five ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) and from the ASEAN secretariat in Jakarta. The ASEAN delegations included the chairmen and representatives of various ASEAN committees as well as members of the ASEAN Ottawa committee. Senior representatives from several Canadian government departments and agencies also participated.

Mr. MacEachen noted that the meeting marked a maturing of a process in Canada's relations with ASEAN since 1976 when, as Secretary of State for External Affairs, he had announced in Jakarta that Canada wished to begin a formal dialogue with



Allan J. MacEachen, Canada's Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for External Affairs (second right), greets Director-General, Office of ASEAN-Thailand, Pracha Guna-kasem, in Ottawa for the Canada-ASEAN Joint Co-operation Committee meeting. Ambassador Vitthya Vejajiva of Thailand (second left), Ambassador Ramon del Rosario of the Philippines (third left) and Ambassador Sime D. Hidalgo, Director-General ASEAN-Philippines, ASEAN chairman of the JCC, look on.



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