

Canada-Asean

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CANADA-ASEAN TIES CONFIRMED

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, expressed pleasure at the mechanisms in place to advance cooperation between Canada and ASEAN. He was speaking at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference in Bangkok on 8 July.

Mr Clark cited the increasingly close commercial relations — reflected by the 33% increase in Canada-ASEAN trade in 1987 — as evidence of the growing maturity of the relationship.

He added that recent activities indicated increased attention to the third ASEAN Summit directives to enhance dialogue collaboration with the private sector. One significant example is the participation of the ASEAN-Canada Business Council at the ASEAN-Canada Joint Cooperation Committee meeting in Ottawa last April.

He also commended the increasing attention being paid to tourism, noting that "people-to-people" contacts are vital to developing a sense of partnership between the two regions.

Mr Clark then briefed his ASEAN colleagues on the recently-signed Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement. This agreement reinforces the multilateral trading system by providing a concrete and compelling alternative to protectionism.

Regular consultations between Canadian and ASEAN trade officials to coordinate activities within the Multilateral Trade Negotiations and the Cairns group were also highlighted by the Minister.

Though it values highly the commercial relationship it has established with ASEAN, development cooperation activities remain a top priority for Canada. Central to Canadian development activities in ASEAN is the area of human resource development. This is in accordance with Canada's recent Charter which outlines the principles underlying development cooperation activity.

In conclusion, Mr Clark expressed thanks to the Government of Thailand for their dedication, efficiency and imagination during their term as Canada's dialogue partner. He added that he was confident that the warmth and momentum that has characterized this partnership will be sustained when Brunei Darussalam takes over as Canada's new dialogue partner.



1. Mr Clark joined fellow Foreign Ministers for a call on Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsulanonda.

2. Mr Clark had discussions with the Foreign Minister of Brunei Darussalam, HRH Prince Mohamed Bolkiah, at the conference.

3. Mr Clark (left) and Undersecretary J.H. Taylor (center) with Thai Foreign Minister Siddhu Savetsila during the exchange of the Canada-Thailand Economic Cooperation Agreement.

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Canada's Stand on Refugees

"Since 1975 more than 115,000 Indochinese have found a home in Canada. Another 6,000 are expected this year and again in 1989. Like you, Mr Chairman, we believe that we must urgently find more durable solutions to this matter and the idea for an early international conference is a welcome initiative. Canada will be an active participant in such a conference, and at the same time, will continue with our substantial assistance through resettlement and humanitarian alternatives.

"We also believe that Vietnam is the source of this continuing human tragedy. Canada is ready, in cooperation with the international community, to urge Vietnam to stem the organised exodus. As well, Vietnam must be urged to accept the return of its citizens who are not refugees and to improve further the orderly departure programs."

Secretary of State for External Affairs Joe Clark, speaking at the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference.