

CANADA-BRUNEI RELATIONS

Canada-Brunei political relations received a strong start when Prime Minister Trudeau paid the first official visit to Brunei by a Foreign head of government in January 1983. Former International Trade Minister Regan represented Canada at Brunei's independence celebrations in February 1984 and diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in May 1984. Within the political context, Canada's bilateral relationship with Brunei is mainly pursued through the Commonwealth and ASEAN. Canadian banks, because of Brunei's large currency reserves, are also showing interest in the country and there may be opportunities to capitalize on diversification of Brunei's management of its financial assets. Education and human resources development also offer potential for increased bilateral relations. There are approximately one hundred Brunian students in Canada. Brunei participated in Expo '86 and the Sultan of Brunei came to Canada to attend the 1987 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver. The Canada-Brunei relationship will intensify rapidly during 1988-89. Brunei became in July 1988 Canada's dialogue coordinator with ASEAN. Moreover, the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Conference will be held in Bandar Seri Begawan in July 1989.