

In the Organization of American States, for example, much of the drive for democratic values and institutions has been reinforced by the support and by the role models provided by other members.

Similarly, economically based organizations such as the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum are already directing their attention to issues that inhibit free and open trade, such as customs and other administrative practices.

By tackling these matters at the regional level, new levels of co-operation can be developed at a more global level. For example, the NAFTA negotiations have focused recently on issues related to labour and the environment. By acknowledging that these issues transcend national borders within the region, we can ensure that they do not become non-tariff barriers to trade, but indeed are dealt with co-operatively. Perhaps ultimately they will have a positive impact on global arrangements.

Regional trading co-operation, by its very nature and magnitude, creates tremendous efficiencies and opportunities for the creation of wealth. It is predicted that a successful ASEAN Free Trade Area would create a combined market of 325 million consumers with a combined gross national product of over US\$300 billion annually.

Canada would very much like to participate in the dramatic progress and prosperity that would result from this initiative.

Our bilateral trade relationship with Thailand at present is substantial: \$903 million in 1992. You are our second-largest export market in ASEAN, and twentieth-largest export market in the world, but we can do better.

Our exports to Thailand reached \$326 million in 1992, which is well above trade levels of only a few years ago -- \$130 million in 1985 -- but still down from the record export level in 1990 of \$492 million.

There have been some regrettable setbacks, of course, such as the cancellation of the Skytrain contract with one of our large Canadian engineering firms. Quite frankly, that incident has shaken the confidence of many Canadian firms interested in investing and trading in the region.

However, there have been some successes as well, such as the recent sale of power sector boiler equipment to the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand by ABB Combustion Canada, worth \$120 million.

And Bell Canada International will provide customer support services for the two million telephone line project here in Bangkok. If there is one thing that Canadians know and love, it