

with notable surpluses in favour of Singapore and the Philippines. This attests to your sustained efforts in promoting ASEAN products in Canada. It also suggests a growing consciousness among Canadians of ASEAN's export capabilities.

The 7 per cent annual growth of ASEAN economies has created opportunities for exports to Canada as well as for exports from Canada. In the period 1975 to 1981, two-way trade between Canada and the ASEAN countries trebled in value from \$350 million to over \$1 billion. Throughout the 1970s, trade between Canada and ASEAN grew as much as three times faster than Canada's trade with the rest of the world.

One of the most visible signs of ASEAN's growing profile came during the recent second Pacific Rim Opportunities Conference in Toronto when the Canadian response to the ASEAN-related discussions and activities was excellent. Media coverage in Canada on ASEAN has also increased substantially, culminating less than a month ago with a full supplement devoted to ASEAN in one of Canada's leading business papers, the *Financial Post*.

It is clear that the Canada-ASEAN relationship is sound and prospects are bright. I am encouraged by the progress attained during the recent dialogue as to how we can work together to quicken our efforts. I see the need to press for the attainment of two major objectives: (1) to make ASEAN a familiar term in the boardrooms of Canada; and (2) to have government and business leaders in ASEAN think of Canada as a reliable trading partner and indeed a major source of goods and services, of technology and investment. In fact, these objectives are two sides of the same coin.

**Extension  
of GSP**

One of the areas of commercial co-operation explored at the dialogue was access to the Canadian market for ASEAN products under the general system of preferences (GSP). I am pleased to report that only a month ago, my government agreed to extend the GSP for a further ten year period and that it will soon be introducing legislation to implement cumulative rules of origin. I understand that progress was made in clarifying other aspects of the GSP that you raised in Manila and that discussions will continue over the coming months.

I think it is important to reiterate here that the Canadian market remains one of the most open in the world with total imports amounting to almost \$70 billion a year. Even in the sensitive area of textile and clothing, Canada is the industrialized world's largest *per capita* importer of textile products and clothing for domestic consumption. The negotiations we concluded recently with four of the ASEAN member countries resulted in terms as generous or more generous than required under the Multi-Fibre Agreement.

Under these conditions and with current plans of the ASEAN member countries for economic diversification, prospects for a greater penetration of the Canadian market