

role for our respective private sectors as we forge even stronger links across the Pacific.

Today, we see Canada-ASEAN co-operation as a relationship of mutual benefit and shared interests -- indeed, of real economic partnership.

Before concluding, let me reflect for a moment on important changes on the political scene in Canada. Ten years since our transpacific trade surpassed our transatlantic trade, and, at a time when Chinese has become the third most widely spoken language in Canadian homes, it is only fitting that our new Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Kim Campbell, is the first Prime Minister born and raised on Canada's Pacific coast. This background has profoundly shaped her view of Canada and the world.

No one can walk down a street in Vancouver without being struck by the impact of Asian trade and culture on that part of our country. Just as Canadian history and development has moved westward from Europe, across the Atlantic and over the continent, our vision and our vocation for the future have increased inexorably in the Pacific. Kim Campbell is uniquely aware of our economic and cultural ties with Asia, and I can assure you of a renewed and intensified focus on Asia-Pacific issues, challenges and opportunities.

In building the transpacific community of which we all speak, ASEAN dialogue is key. I am confident that ASEAN's success will produce a ripple effect, as the causes of peace, prosperity, human rights and security move forward both within this region and well beyond its boundaries.

A key focus of the 21st century will be on the Pacific region and its nations. It's a tremendous honour for me to join you today in the ASEAN PMC process, a process at the very heart of this new Pacific century.