

multilateral trading system functions to the benefit of all countries, including middle and small trading nations.

As ASEAN countries also rely heavily on their exports in order to reach their developmental objectives, they too are attaching much importance to the successful outcome of the current MTN round.

Canada and the ASEAN countries share many of the same concerns and have similar objectives regarding the MTN. Already co-operating in the on-going Geneva negotiations, and in the Cairns Group on Agriculture, Canada and ASEAN expect to work closely during the Montreal meeting. With this end in mind, Canadian officials plan to hold consultations in the ASEAN capitals prior to the Montreal Ministerial Meeting.

## SETTING STANDARDS

Technical standards governing the processes of testing and certification of manufactured products play an important role in international trading relationships. They can act as barriers to trade just as surely as quotas, tariffs or other protective measures.

In April 1988 the Canadian Government invited representatives of standards institutes from each ASEAN country to survey Canada's National Standards Systems. The objectives were to assist ASEAN's development in the standards field, as well as enhance the ASEAN-Canadian trading relationship through the evolution of comparable standards policy and testing procedures. The two-week visit was timed in order to permit participants to attend the Pacific Area Standards Congress in Vancouver in the same month.

The Mission comprised 11 delegates: two from the national standards bodies of Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Thailand; one from Singapore; and two from the Ministry of Development, Brunei. It was funded by the CIDA ASEAN Regional Program.

Through the cooperation of the Standards Council of Canada, a program of lectures, briefings, laboratory, and factory tours with testing demonstrations, was organized in Ottawa, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver. The 10 Canadian organizations involved in the program were all ac-

## Strengthening Business Ties

The participation of the private sector in the JCC meeting represented a milestone in Canada-ASEAN economic relations. This was expressed by Jean McCloskey, ADM, Asia and Pacific Branch, and leader of the Canadian delegation to the JCC. She added that she was convinced that their participation could offer new impetus and insights into building a long-term economic relationship between ASEAN and Canada.

Mrs McCloskey's remarks were supported by Ir Achmad Sarbini of Indonesia, ASEAN Co-chairman who headed the ASEAN ACBC delegation of six. He stated that "cooperation between supportive and open-minded Governments with dedicated private sectors [should] accelerate the economic development of both regions, ASEAN and Canada".

At the ACBC Joint Executive Committee Meeting held in Ottawa prior to the JCC meeting, members reviewed the role of the ACBC and discussed plans for future endeavours. They considered ways in which the ACBC could assist in building direct contacts between Canadian and ASEAN companies in order to encourage two-way exchange of manufactured goods and services.

Roy Aitken, Canadian Co-chairman and head of the Canadian delegation of eight, noted that "while Government sets the climate in which companies operate, the private sector, through ACBC, should explore ways in which it can best help Canadian companies do business in ASEAN".

Later, between 8 and 15 April, the ACBC presented a series of seminars, entitled "ASEAN Focus: New Opportunities for Canadian Business", in four Canadian cities: Montreal, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver. The objective of the seminars was to educate the Canadian private sector on the trade and investment opportunities in the ASEAN countries, therefore stimulating an interest among Canadian business people to undertake long-term commercial activities in the region.

credited members of the National Standards System, representing the three major disciplines of standards development, certification and testing.

Members of the Mission were called upon to engage in a busy, crammed schedule of activities over the two-week period and their participation was both enthusiastic and informed. Their Canadian hosts were most impressed with the quality of the discussions they prompted and there was a most constructive exchange of ideas and information.

An unexpected by-product of the Mission was the fact that it provided members of the various ASEAN standards institutions with an opportunity to develop a deeper acquaintance and understanding of each other as well as their Canadian hosts. A number of observations were made to this effect. In the words of Mr R.V. Navarrete, director of the Bureau of Product Standards, Philippines, and spokesperson for the ASEAN participants at the Mission's final dinner in Vancouver: "The chemistry was right."

## TRADE UPDATE

- In 1987 a sudden surge in the volume of imports of sweaters from the Philippines prompted the Canadian Government to request that they be included as an item in the Philippines/Canada Textiles and Garments Restraint Agreement. In January 1988 the Philippine Authorities were officially notified of Canada's wish to hold consultations with respects to this issue. As a result of these consultations, which took place in February 1988, imports of Philippine sweaters will be monitored to allow for greater growth in the Philippine share of the Canadian market without seriously disrupting the Canadian sweater industry.

- In March 1988 the Canadian Ambassador to Indonesia, Jack A. Whittleton, announced the signing of a