

In fact, over the past year the Canadian Government has worked actively to assist the ASEAN countries in penetrating the Canadian market. In this regard, I would draw particular attention to the seminars held by the Canadian Trade Facilitation Office, financed by CIDA, in ASEAN. Canada has also worked to stimulate interest in investment and investment-related missions have come from ASEAN to Canada in the past year. In fact it will be my pleasure to participate in the opening of two joint venture operations during my forthcoming visits to Thailand and Indonesia.

Mr. Chairman, knowledge and communication are two essential dimensions of increased trade. I had the pleasure of participating in a Pacific Rim Opportunities Conference in Toronto this March. The ASEAN countries were extremely active participants. However, a focus on trade and commercial matters alone will not be sufficient in itself to create the sort of comprehensive relationship that we desire.

You have made reference to the establishment in 1984 of the Asia Pacific Foundation, with a most rare all party support in the Canadian Parliament. This was motivated specifically by a desire to provide both a focus and a catalyst for the further development of the relationship. With its headquarters in Vancouver, its objective is to coordinate and stimulate a broad range of activities, towards strengthening commercial, developmental, cultural and educational cooperation with the countries of Asia. I think I can personally claim a degree of paternity for the Foundation -- it was during my time as Prime Minister in 1979 that the initial moves towards its establishment were taken -- and I take considerable satisfaction from the fact that it has now become a reality.

I believe it is highly significant that the first major undertaking cosponsored by the Foundation took place in an ASEAN country - a conference in Indonesia co-sponsored by the Centre for Strategic and International Studies. It is a measure of the success of the Canada-Indonesia Conference that the Foundation is now actively considering the possibilities for similar conferences with other ASEAN countries.

An important focus of the Asia Pacific Foundation will be the expansion of human contacts between Canada and the ASEAN countries. I think enhanced understanding and sensitivity to each other's interests and objectives is crucial to a healthy relationship. As you know, there are