

Obviously, Indonesia is a dynamic country which should be increasingly recognized in the business strategies of more and more Canadian firms pursuing business opportunities in Asia.

The importance of our bilateral economic partnership is why Prime Minister Chrétien has made Indonesia a principal destination in his Team Canada mission to South and Southeast Asia early in January.

The Prime Minister's Team Canada mission represents the largest Canadian business delegation ever to travel to Indonesia. It comprises hundreds of representatives of leading Canadian firms, small and large.

Members of the business delegation will have the opportunity to participate in the Canada-Indonesia Business Conference taking place at the time of the Prime Minister's visit. The Conference, which I hope to co-chair with my Indonesian counterpart, will provide practical insight on doing business in Indonesia. It will focus on the seven priority sectors: transport, energy, telecommunications, environment, agri-food, education and financial services.

Canada and Indonesia are a "good fit." The development of Indonesia's natural resources - especially mining, oil and gas and forestry - has benefited from Canadian investment and technology for over 30 years. Indonesia's enormous requirements for large-scale infrastructure development in the energy, transport and telecommunications sectors match Canadian capability to an exceptional degree. Environmental services also represents a key area for Canadian companies in Indonesia. Canadians, through our aid program, have assisted in the formulation of Indonesia's environmental regulatory framework, resulting in a special opportunity for our environmental engineering and service firms. These and other factors augur well for yet greater Canada-Indonesia trade and investment.

In Indonesia, as in many other markets, it is important for a company to make a concrete commitment to the market by establishing a local office or by forming a joint venture with a local partner. Already there are over 100 Canadian companies represented in Indonesia in one form or another and more are entering the market every month.

Although attention is often focussed on large companies, the Canadian presence in Indonesia is not limited to only internationally renowned corporations. Small and medium-sized firms with unique expertise in emerging technologies and specialized services are also active.

In effect, SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] account for a significant portion of the 200 per cent increase in the number