

CANADA-ASEAN

ISSN 0129 - 9638



JANUARY 1987 VOL 1

Asia-Pacific: A priority

Canada recognizes as national policy that its future prosperity is tied to the Pacific and has therefore made the region an area of priority for trade, commented Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark.

Addressing the opening dinner of the Fifth Pacific Economic Co-operation (PEC) Conference (see article this page), Mr. Clark went on to say that in the Canadian government's agenda for 1987 special emphasis is being placed on broadening the country's economic and trade relations with Pacific nations.

Said Mr. Clark: "Canada's stake is clear. Two years ago, our Pacific trade surpassed our trade across the Atlantic. Japan, China, Korea and Australia are all among our top 10 customers. Our trade with members of the ASEAN nations has tripled over the last decade. More business and government missions are visiting the region than ever before."

Concrete action

He added that concrete action reflecting government policy has been taken in the Pacific region.

Since October 1985, the Canadian government has opened new trade offices in Auckland, Bombay, Osaka and Shanghai. The resources of other posts in the Pacific have been strengthened. All at a time when Canadian diplomatic and trade stations are being closed in the United States, Europe, Latin America and Africa.

Mr. Clark also believes that for PEC to be truly successful, the six ASEAN nations must be completely engaged in the process.

Complementary objectives

"We believe that rather than detracting from the integrity of ASEAN, the PEC process can complement ASEAN objectives."

He went on to reassure the ASEAN delegates that Canada's commitment to ASEAN will not slacken because of greater Canadian involvement in PEC.

"We believe that only with ASEAN's full support, will Pacific Economic Co-operation reach its full potential," concluded Mr. Clark.



Vancouver, the site of the fifth PEC Conference, is the largest port on the west coast of North America.

Pacific Co-operation valuable

The ASEAN countries now recognize that Pacific Economic Co-operation (PEC) can be a constructive and useful process and are no longer concerned about the motivation behind PEC commented Dr. Subroto, the Indonesian Minister of Energy and Mines.

Enhance co-operation

Dr. Subroto made this comment as he addressed the more than 150 delegates from 14 countries who attended the Fifth Pacific Economic Co-operation Conference in order to enhance and explore ways for Pacific nations to co-operate in the economic sphere.

Held in Vancouver last November, the four-day conference attracted two participants for the first time: The China

National Committee for Pacific Economic Co-operation and the Chinese Taipei Committee for Pacific Economic Co-operation. There was strong representation from all the ASEAN countries whose members made substantive contributions to the conference.

In addition, there were numerous observers from Latin America, the European Economic Community and institutions such as the Asian Development Bank. The Soviet Union also attended, as an observer, for the first time.

The ASEAN delegates and those from the South Pacific Islands were pleased with the outcome of a fisheries forum, held during the conference, which they say has made concrete contributions to fisheries development in the region.

Min. des Affaires extérieures
OTTAWA
MAY 25 1987
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