

Fundamental to our mutual interests is our common desire to promote peace and prosperity -- in Asia, and elsewhere in the world. Canada has consistently supported and collaborated in ASEAN's search for a peaceful solution to the Cambodian problem. Like you, we have pressed for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. And like you, we feel a deep respect for international law and a strong desire to promote the peaceful resolution of disputes.

We also share a strong belief in free market economies and open societies. Our relative prosperity is the result of our respect for the individual, and our conviction that promoting people-to-people contacts is an essential step toward international understanding and global prosperity.

These shared beliefs have forged stronger economic and commercial relationships between us. Two-way trade between ASEAN and Canada has tripled over the last decade, amounting to \$2.6 billion in 1988 - a healthy increase of 33 per cent over the 1987 figure. You will be happy to know that our imports from ASEAN have grown even faster than our exports, leaving a balance-of-trade surplus of \$336 million in ASEAN's favour last year.

On the international scene, both Canada and ASEAN are active participants in the GATT and the 1986 Uruguay Round of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations. We also share, with Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines and Indonesia, membership in the Cairns Group, which has shown leadership in seeking to remove subsidies and barriers that distort agricultural trade.

I see development cooperation as very much a means to promote closer collaboration between Canada and ASEAN. By working together in worthwhile development efforts, we not only promote economic growth in the region, but also create an opportunity to understand and learn from one another.

Although we as Canadians are justifiably proud of our advanced technology, we have learned that when we come to your region to share our knowledge, we return home much enriched by the process. Our development program with ASEAN is cooperation in the truest sense.

We will continue to emphasize human resource development and the building of institutional capacity. We will remain active throughout the entire ASEAN region. The Centre will serve as a catalyst for our activities in all ASEAN member countries.