

To date, the environment represents a major success story. Our dialogue with Malaysia in areas like forestry is of real mutual benefit. Among other things, Malaysia and Canada have taken the lead together in organizing a working group on global forests that now has governments from a range of countries sitting down to discuss issues like sustainable development. Commercially, the environment is one of our most active sectors, as exemplified by the number of joint ventures established. On this visit, I am pleased to be able to participate with Malaysia's Minister of Science, Technology and Environment, Dato Dr. Law Hieng Ding, in a ceremony marking the launch of co-operation between the Canadian Environment Industry Association and the Association of Environmental Consultants and Contractors of Malaysia.

This business-to-business level of co-operation will generate even more opportunities for co-operation, technology transfer and, not to be forgotten, profit in a sector that benefits us all.

Canada's growing profile in Malaysia also extends to the education sphere. Over 70 000 Malaysians have completed education programs in Canada thus far. Canadian education providers are keenly exploring new and innovative approaches in education co-operation with Malaysian institutions, including twinning programs, branch campuses, and exchange programs. Six Canadian universities are twinned with the international medical college in Kuala Lumpur, and initiatives with other colleges are under way.

I look forward to visiting Sunway College, which, along with Taylors' College, currently provides Canadian pre-university education to approximately 800 Malaysians. The recent visits to Malaysia of Premier Rae and Canadian academic delegations emphasize both the importance that is placed on internationalizing Canadian education and the support and guidance that the Canadian governments are enthusiastically providing. I applaud Malaysia's objective of becoming the regional centre of education in Southeast Asia. I can assure you that Canadian education providers aspire to play a leading role in the fulfilment of this goal.

I spoke earlier about the many levels on which we as Canadians interact with an area as vast and diverse as the Asia-Pacific region. In doing that, I wanted to remind you that this is not merely the stuff of international diplomacy or academic research, and that it has at its basis the desire to advance the real and specific interests — personal, cultural, commercial — of individuals on both sides of the Pacific.

Trade between Canada and Malaysia has reached impressive levels and continues to grow. Less visible, but perhaps even more important, is the steady proliferation of business connections