

Canada and Asean continue to cooperate closely in the multilateral trade negotiations. We, like the rest of the GATT membership, were greatly encouraged with the results of the Mid-Term Review, begun in Montreal last December and completed in Geneva in April. We are delighted that the process is back on track. I would hope that we will continue to cooperate closely in ensuring that the momentum continues for a successful conclusion of the Round.

Canada is already moving to make access to our markets easier. Effective July 1, 1989 we reduced import duties on approximately \$146 million of imports of tropical products. This is of major interest to several members of Asean. Canada already provides duty-free entry on a major portion of tropical product imports. With the new reductions in place, 98 percent of these imports with a current value of \$1.2 billion, will enter Canada duty-free or at reduced rates under special tariff preferences.

Canada was also pleased with the success of the international conference on Indochinese refugees which His Excellency Datuk Abu Hassan, so ably chaired. The Comprehensive Program of Action reaffirmed the principle of first asylum, notwithstanding the tremendous burden which the mass exodus of Vietnamese and other Indochinese peoples has imposed on ASEAN.

We also welcomed the development of a humane system for screening of new arrivals to determine whether or not they are Convention refugees. We expect this will contribute to orderly and legal departures from Vietnam under such programmes as Canada's family reunification program.

Yesterday, I confirmed that Canada is committed to help resettle the "longstayers" in camps in Asean and Hong Kong. Our commitment is to take a minimum of 16,000 persons over the next three years.

I also emphasized that Canada fully endorses the principle that any repatriation must be voluntary. To do otherwise would undermine the wide public support we have in our countries for these programs. Like other elements in the CPA, this must be carefully managed and given a chance to work.

Your Highness, let me now turn to the future and the important activities which are ahead. On Monday I will be in Singapore to formally open the Canada-Asean Centre. It has been my hope for some time to provide a focus in the region for Canada-ASEAN activities. The new Centre will do so. It will foster understanding between our governments and peoples, improve our existing activities, and add measurably to our relations.