

# Canada Weekly

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## External affairs minister visits Southeast Asia

Secretary of State for External Affairs Mark MacGuigan attended the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) foreign ministers' meeting with dialogue partners in Singapore, June 17-18 and later paid a two-day official visit to Thailand.

ASEAN is composed of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand. The meeting with dialogue partners (Canada, Japan, the United States, the European Economic Community, Australia and New Zealand) consists of a series of individual and collective meetings between the foreign ministers of the countries with which ASEAN has established a formal relationship or "dialogue".

During his speech to the ASEAN meeting, Dr. MacGuigan referred to the third Canada-ASEAN dialogue session that took place recently in Manila. The dialogue served to identify some activities that would further Canada-ASEAN co-operation, including a seminar in Canada in 1983 to bring together Canadian and ASEAN energy experts followed by a study tour of Canadian energy institutions including Petro-Canada International which has identified the Philippines and Thailand among the principal countries for receipt of assistance to reduce their dependence on imported oil. Canada also undertook financing of a technical economic feasibility study on the setting up of a regional coal handling depot. In addition, the Canadian government will provide \$500 000 to help support studies which would lead to Canada-ASEAN collaboration in oceanography.

### Canada-ASEAN trade

Dr. MacGuigan commended ASEAN export performance in the Canadian market in 1981. ASEAN countries enjoyed an increase of 16 per cent in exports to Canada which the Canadian external affairs minister attributed to promotion of ASEAN products and a "growing consciousness among Canadians of ASEAN's export capabilities".

Two-way trade between Canada and ASEAN countries tripled in value from \$350 million to more than \$1 billion in the period 1975-1981. Throughout the 1970s, trade between Canada and ASEAN grew as much as three times faster than Canada's trade with the rest of the world.

Secretary of State for External Affairs MacGuigan told the meeting that the Canada-ASEAN relationship is "sound and prospects are bright". He added that there were two major objectives to be reached: to make ASEAN a familiar term in the boardrooms of Canada, and to have government and business leaders in ASEAN think of Canada as a reliable trading partner and as a major source of goods and services of technology and investment.

Dr. MacGuigan said that Canadian firms were anxious to participate in the development plans of ASEAN countries especially in the areas of energy and resource development, transportation and telecommunications. The Canadian external affairs minister also referred to



External affairs minister Mark MacGuigan receives memento of his visit to Thailand from Foreign Minister Siddhi Sawetsila.

Canada Weekly will not be published during the weeks of August 4, 11, and 18 but will reappear the week of August 25.



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