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MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE CONCLUDES VISIT TO SOUTHEAST ASIA

The Minister for International Trade, James Kelleher, today concluded his 2 week trade mission to London, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

On the Southeast Asian leg of the mission Minister Kelleher was accompanied by 40 Canadian businessmen and met with 15 Cabinet Minister from the 4 ASEAN countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

"The Asia Pacific region has now overtaken Western Europe as our second most important trading block", Mr. Kelleher said. "On this trip I have had the pleasure of announcing almost \$100 million worth of contracts awarded to Canadian firms now doing business in this vital area. As for the future, we have opened lines of credit for more than \$65 million to facilitate new exports to the region".

Mr. Kelleher added "the amount of business we have done and the high level of acceptance we have met demonstrates the tremendous potential for Canadian business in the Asean area and throughout the Pacific Rim. This is why, under our National Trade Strategy, we have been dedicating so much effort in terms of increased funding and human resources, to our Pacific Rim trade thrust".

The agenda for the next round of multilateral trade negotiations (MTN) which is scheduled to start in September of 86 was an issue which was raised in the meetings the Minister held with his ASEAN counterparts. "Many countries in the region are asking Canada to play a leadership role in the next round of talks" Kelleher said. "Canada is prepared to provide that leadership".

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