

Export Development Corporation), Antoinette M. Vita (Manager of Trade Finance at the Bank of Montreal) and Howie Wong (partner at Gowling, Strathy and Henderson). Lawyer Howie Wong underlined the need for Canadians to be well informed about the legal frameworks and assumptions of the countries in which they were doing business. In particular, Mr. Wong suggested that particular attention be paid to contract law, human rights, and intellectual property.

Concluding comments

"Canada – East Asia: Business Connections" was a conference that did more than simply address questions about trading relationships with East Asia. By drawing on a wide range of expertise, and a diverse audience, participants were able to consider the future of Canadian and Southeast Asian relations in a broad social and cultural context. In identifying the commonalities and differences shared by Canada and Southeast Asia, great gains were made towards building a sustained and rewarding base for long and short-term trading relationships. Providing businesses with the opportunity to share information and experience with one another was one of the more successful components of the conference.

The East Asian Autumn Festival and the conference on "Canada – East Asia Business Connections" built links with academics, students, interested citizens, and government in order to enhance the understanding of Southeast Asia's unique character. Both events attracted significant attention in the local press that described the events as, "far more interesting, more important and more enduring, than the ups and downs of stock markets and currency exchanges."

Based on the success of this festival and conference, future discussions of Canada – East Asia relations will continue to be most beneficial and rewarding.