Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen. As Canada's Trade Minister I am pleased to be making my first visit to Indonesia and must say that I am delighted with the warm welcome I have received. At the outset, I would particularly like to thank Minister Saleh, my host and colleague, for his kind hospitality and for the excellent arrangements for my visit both in Bali and Jakarta.

It is a privilege to address this combined luncheon of the Canadian Business Association and the Indonesia-Canada Business Council. I am particularly pleased to see so many from the Canadian private sector represented here today. I understand that around 30 Canadian firms have established offices in Jakarta.

The Asia/Pacific region has always been of particular interest to me. When my family moved from Shanghai, where I was born, they settled in Canada's Pacific Province of British Columbia. Today, I continue to travel frequently and extensively throughout the Asia/Pacific region, which has a top priority in Canadian foreign and trade policy.

As a former Energy Minister, I am impressed at how successfully Indonesia has met the challenges imposed by the fall in world oil prices. And, as a Trade Minister with a particular interest in resolving the current crisis in agricultural trade, I am very much aware of this country's enviable achievement in reaching self-sufficiency in rice production -- so important to domestic economic stability.

I should add that Indonesia's measures toward liberalization of its economy and trade regime are both courageous and welcome. At a time of creeping protectionism in the world the positive example set by these measures, and very positive results that should accrue to the Indonesian economy, provide an outstanding international illustration of the benefits of freer trade.

Trade, of course, plays a crucial role in the economic well-being of this region, and many of you in this room are at the heart of significant trading activity. In 1986, trade among Pacific countries accounted for some 40 per cent of world trade.