

The response of ASEAN to this challenge was made at the heads-of-state meeting in Bali on February 23 and 24, 1976. The results of that meeting marked a new and significant stage in the development of the association. Moved by a fresh sense of urgency, the members agreed to a greater centralization of the organization and to a wide range of measures in the political, economic, social and cultural fields calculated to achieve closer regional co-operation. The fundamental purpose was to create a regional group of increasingly self-reliant states that would work together to bring social justice and economic well-being to their peoples and to ensure the peace and prosperity of Southeast Asia without the intrusion of external powers.

Not military

Emphasis was deliberately placed on the political and the economic, and not on the military, as the means to achieve this goal. As Hussein Onn said to the Asia Society: "All considered, the countries of ASEAN, in the strength of their respective national foundations, and the increasing areas of their collective co-operation and response, are geared to meet the challenge that the Communist forces in Indochina may pose for the future, without having to go backwards to the politics of a major power umbrella or the inception of the military bloc."

Since the Bali summit meeting, ASEAN has shown real determination to work towards fulfilling the commitments assumed on that occasion. Not surprisingly, there have been differences of view among the members concerning priorities and the rate of progress. However, the summit meeting at Kuala Lumpur on August 3 and 4, 1977, which celebrated the tenth anniversary of the association, was able to carry out an impressive stocktaking exercise.

ASEAN has made it clear that, while its immediate goals are regional, its concern is global. It is part of the Third World and, as such, is resolved to help create a new international economic order. It recognizes, therefore, the need for a constructive relation between the industrialized and developing parts of the world. Consequently, to develop links with third countries and regional organizations in the industrialized world has been one of the most important activities of the association. In pursuit of this aim, ASEAN has established "dialogues" - to use its own term - with Australia, New Zealand, Japan, the EEC, the United States and Canada.

What, precisely, attracts ASEAN to Canada? In his welcoming remarks to the first ASEAN-Canada meeting, held in Manila on February 3 and 4, 1977, the Phi-

lippines Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Carlos Romulo, referred to Canada's *Strategy for International Development Co-operation 1975-1980*, and noted that "Canada will encourage and promote a regional focus on development problems by supporting regional institutions which bring together several developing countries and by promoting development projects undertaken by groups of countries". In addition, ASEAN, as an exponent of the new international economic order, seeks to improve the terms of trade with Canada for its members. This matter has figured prominently in ASEAN-Canada discussions.

Mr Romulo went on to say: "It is, of course, in the interest of Canada and of all other developed countries of the world for developing countries such as the members of ASEAN to accelerate their pace of development so as to be better and active partners in trade and industry." The benefits of co-operation were recognized as not being one-sided. Mr Romulo also pointed out that "... ASEAN, with its over one-quarter of a billion population, its rich natural resources, and its five countries whose economies are on the thresholds of high levels of sustained growth, presents enormous potential for mutually-satisfying collaboration with any country or groups of countries."

Pacific nation

What other considerations draw Canada to ASEAN? Since the early postwar years, we have been involved in Southeast Asia. As a Pacific nation, it is logical for Canada to become involved with countries across the Western ocean. Canada was a founding member of the Colombo Plan in 1950, one of the early enterprises in the field of international development assistance and one that was devoted to the welfare of the countries of South and Southeast Asia. Two participants in the Colombo Plan are Commonwealth partners of Canada and members of ASEAN. Canada participated in all the truce-supervisory commissions in Indochina, with, on one occasion, Indonesia, from their inception in 1954 until the Canadian withdrawal in 1973. The ending of the war in Indochina afforded Canadians the opportunity to apply their resources more productively in other areas. It meant that they could give greater, more fruitful expression to the Pacific dimension of Canadian foreign policy and could pursue more vigorously the expansion of relations with countries in Asia in accordance with the Third Option. Canada had already established good working relations with each of the five members of ASEAN. It had already invested substantial human and material resources over a period of 20 years in an

*Improvement
of trade terms
discussed*