

ASEAN TOWARDS CANADA.

I AM PLEASED TO LEARN THAT OUR RESPECTIVE PRIVATE SECTORS HAVE AGREED TO EXAMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING SOME FORM OF FORMAL LINKS WITH ONE ANOTHER THROUGH THE CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (CCC) AND THE ASEAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (ASEAN-CCI). THAT IS AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD. DIRECT BUSINESS CONTACTS BUILD BETTER COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. CHAIRMAN, A COUNTRY'S MOST PRECIOUS ASSETS ARE ITS PEOPLE. CANADA RECOGNIZES THE TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE ASEAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE ASSIGNED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR HUMAN RESOURCES. CIDA IN ITS PROGRAMS IS PARTICULARLY SUPPORTIVE OF ACTIVITIES THAT ASSIST WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF OUR EXISTING DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH ASEAN ON A REGIONAL BASIS FOCUSES ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT. WE ARE LOOKING AT A NUMBER OF POSSIBILITIES WHICH WE HOPE WILL CONSTITUTE AN INNOVATIVE RESPONSE TO ASEAN INTERESTS AND WHICH WOULD RESULT IN A GREATER CANADIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THIS VITAL AREA.

MY SENIOR OFFICIALS WILL BE APPROACHING THEIR ASEAN COUNTERPARTS OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS TO ELABORATE AND DISCUSS THESE PROPOSALS.