

I am very honoured to be here today, and happy to meet and discuss education issues with all of you.

If Malaysia is to achieve its bold "Vision 2020" objectives, human resource development will be essential. As the Malaysian economy shifts to a focus on the advanced manufacturing and service sectors, there will continue to be a critical need for an educated workforce.

Canadian Education Co-operation in Malaysia

Since Malaysian independence in 1957, over 70 000 Malaysians have been educated in Canada. Even your Minister of Education, Datuk Amar Dr. Sulaiman Daud, is a Canadian Alumnus; he holds a post-graduate degree from the University of Toronto. Canadian institutions are eager to continue to help meet Malaysia's education and training needs. Canada actively supports increased education co-operation with Malaysia.

Here are some examples. The Education Canada office in Kuala Lumpur was officially opened in 1989 through funding from the Canadian International Development Agency. The same agency, CIDA, has also provided over 1.2 million ringgit in funding to a joint initiative by University Utara Malaysia and the University of Saskatchewan to develop management capabilities in support of Malaysian economic development objectives. In 1993, CIDA entered into an agreement with Lasalle International Fashion School to provide six scholarships worth a total of 162 000 ringgit. As well, in 1993 and 1994, the Canada ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] Centre provided funding for 15 University of Victoria M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration] students to undertake a six-week study tour of the Asia-Pacific. This tour included one-month placements with Malaysian companies.

Canadian Education Opportunities

Canada has much to offer Malaysian students wishing to study overseas and is on the leading edge of provision of education services. Consider the following examples. The medical faculties of six Canadian universities are twinned with the International Medical College of Kuala Lumpur. Three Canadian universities, the University of Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba, and Acadia University, have twinning arrangements in Malaysia. I need hardly mention here that a twinning arrangement between the University of Calgary and Sunway College is already in the works.

Lasalle College was the first Canadian institution to operate a branch campus in Malaysia, with the establishment of the Lasalle International Fashion School in Kuala Lumpur in 1993. Other Canadian universities, including the University of British Columbia, the University of Alberta, Dalhousie University, the University of Saskatchewan, and numerous others have pledged to increase enrolment of Malaysian students. Dalhousie University,