

2.4 Canada-Thailand Relations

Canada's interest in Thailand dates from Canadian participation in the Indochina Control Commissions and the Colombo Plan in the 1950's. Relations have broadened over the years with Canada's increased interest in the region. Thailand was Canada's dialogue co-ordinator with ASEAN 1985-1988. During this period, the Canada-ASEAN dialogue gained new momentum due very much to Thai initiative and assistance. Canada has accepted over 110,000 refugees from Indochina since 1979, of which over 37,000 have come from camps in Thailand.

Total Canadian exports to Thailand in 1988 were up 32.8% from 1987, totalling \$259 million; imports totalled \$343.4 million, representing an increase of 64%. Trade between Canada and Thailand is carried out under the GATT. Total trade in 1988 reached \$602.4 million. The Thai government announced recently that Lavalin's bid for the construction of the \$2.02 billion Bangkok Mass Rapid Transit system, had been selected. This is the same system as Vancouver's Skytrain.

Thailand is a beneficiary of Canada's General Preferential Tariff. A Foreign Investment Insurance Agreement was signed in January, 1983 and a Double Taxation Agreement in April 1, 1984. Thailand is a designated target country under the Asia Pacific component of the government's National Trade Strategy. An Economic Cooperation Agreement was signed in July 1988. Direct air links began with Canadian Airlines International service to Bangkok in October, 1987, and Thai International service to Toronto in July, 1988. A new air services agreement which expands a bilateral accord negotiated in 1986 was reached by Canada and Thailand in October 1988.

The aid program in Thailand has recently been increased to \$150 million over the next five years. A substantial portion of bilateral development assistance is directed to technical assistance and industrial cooperation under the "Enterprise Thailand" Program.

2.5 Aquaculture Industry

Thailand's total coastline measures approximately 2,600 kilometres with many sites suitable for aquaculture both in the Gulf of Thailand and in the Andaman Sea.

The Thai aquaculture industry raises a wide variety of species in both fresh-water and marine environments. These species come from the full range of aquatic organisms, finfish, molluscs, and crustaceans.

Freshwater species are raised in earthen ponds, paddy fields, ditches and in cages in rivers. Marine aquaculture uses brackish water ponds and cage culture.

The industry is dominated by the shrimp and prawn culture which in 1987 produced over 11,000 metric tonnes of Giant Freshwater Prawns and over 23,000 metric tonnes of marine shrimp and prawns. This production doubled by 1988 making Thailand the third largest producer of cultured shrimp and prawns in the world (behind the Peoples Republic of China and Indonesia.)