

# STATEMENT DISCOURS

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Notes for an introductory  
statement by the  
Right Honourable Joe Clark,  
Secretary of State for  
External Affairs, to the ASEAN  
Post-Ministerial Conference  
Six-Plus-One Meeting

SINGAPORE, June 20, 1987

OTTAWA

June 24, 1987.

Mr. Chairman and Colleagues:

I am very pleased to be with you again for the annual Post-Ministerial Conference.

I should like first to thank our host, Foreign Minister Dhanabalan, for the warm welcome we have received and for the excellent arrangements he and his Ministry have made for this conference.

I wish also to express my appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the extremely constructive role it has played over the past two years as co-ordinator for Canada's dialogue relationship with ASEAN. These two years have been very productive and, in large measure, this has been possible because of the cooperation and support we have received from Foreign Minister Siddhi and his able officials.

Canada takes ASEAN very seriously, both the concept and your direction. We see ASEAN as a continuing force for the security, stability and economic progress of Southeast Asia. We are encouraged by the renewed emphasis that is being placed on more economic integration within ASEAN. We wish you well with your efforts to reduce the barriers among ASEAN states, as we strive together toward freer trade among all the world's nations. We understand the importance of the ASEAN Heads of Government Meeting in Manila later this year, and will submit our views well before that meeting as to improvements we both might contemplate in the relations between ASEAN and Canada.

Over the past decade, that relationship has matured and developed. Our views are similar on a range of international and regional economic and political issues. A prime example is our co-operation on the new round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, in capitals, in Geneva and in the Cairns Groups of agricultural free traders. This past week, a Canadian MTN delegation has completed another visit to ASEAN capitals and we look forward to continuing this close collaboration.

On the political front, we will continue our full support for ASEAN's position with respect to the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. We have pledged, again this year, assistance to the non-communist elements of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea.

In Manila last June, I set out a number of initiatives by which Canada intended to respond to ASEAN's priorities in trade, human resource development, and industrial development.

Most of these undertakings are realities today. An ASEAN Human Resources Development Fund has been established in the amount of Canadian \$750,000, to be used for study tours and training programs in Canada, mainly for government personnel. In addition, we have established an ASEAN Scholarship Fund large enough to permit approximately 30 person/years of diploma and graduate training in Canadian academic institutions. The combined annual funding for these programs exceeds \$1.3 million, and, if ASEAN's response is strong, a larger fund could be put in place.

I wish to announce Canada's support for the second phase of the Fisheries and Grain Post Harvest Projects. Naturally, I was pleased today to sign the Protocol agreeing to the second phase of the Tree Seed Centre Project. Ministers will know of Canada's particular interest in programs which encourage women in development and we continue to give priority to programs with that purpose.

Mr. Chairman, as a concrete manifestation of our long-term interest and involvement in Southeast Asia, Canada will establish a Canada-ASEAN Centre in this region, which will commence operation in 1988. The Centre will support our diplomatic missions in the region on ASEAN-wide development activities. In particular, it will administer the Human Resources Development and Scholarship Programs and assist students and others seeking educational and training opportunities in Canada. It will also take on a coordinating and supporting role for existing regional programs, such as the ASEAN Forest-Tree Seed Centre and the Post-harvest Grains and Fisheries Projects.

Canada fully realizes the importance of trade and industrial development to the future of ASEAN. I want to see increased exports from your countries to Canada, just as I want to see more Canadian products throughout Southeast Asia. We have established an elaborate and important network of conferences and consultations. But I am not satisfied that these have resulted in the improvements we need in trade and investment. As Foreign Ministers who meet formally each year, we have an obligation to ensure that there are concrete results to our co-operation.

Canada is a big country and a complex market. We are ready to help your exporters promote their products in our market. We are dedicating 3/4 of a million dollars to finance visits by the ASEAN private sector to Canada. Participants will explore and develop market opportunities, attend market information seminars, and participate in such missions as food packaging, processing and marketing.

We are also funding the newly-formed ASEAN-Canada Business Council (ACBC) to promote two-way trade and investment. That council will work with the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the Conference Board of Canada, and other institutions, on a major research program to help entrepreneurs and investors, in Canada and ASEAN, do business together more knowledgeably. We are also considering an innovative executive exchange program for young business people from Canada and ASEAN.

These initiatives are designed to step up the involvement of our private sectors in expanding two-way trade and investment.

Another important initiative involving the private sector was the Canada-ASEAN forum in Vancouver last September. Senior business representatives from each side were brought together to identify mutual opportunities. Valuable and profitable contacts were made in various sectors such as oil and gas and telecommunications.

This annual meeting is mainly an opportunity for us to focus on our relationship with ASEAN as a whole. But that relationship has been substantially enhanced by virtue of the excellent bilateral ties we enjoy with each of the member states of ASEAN. An example of our commitment to these relations has been a continuing series of country-specific conferences, the next of which will be early next year on trade and investment in Singapore.

These contacts demonstrate clearly Canada's strong and continued partnership with ASEAN. We share so many common interests - in trade, investment and economic policy, in human resources development, and in many matters of international policy. These interests build naturally on the excellent relations we enjoy with member states individually, and I look forward to continuing our work together in the years ahead.