



Minister for
International Trade

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MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE
ANNOUNCES CANADA/ASEAN FORUM

The Minister for International Trade, the Honourable Pat Carney, announced today a Canada/ASEAN Forum to start September 10, in Victoria, British Columbia.

The Forum focuses on three major industry sectors: oil and gas, mineral development and telecommunications. It brings together 25 senior private sector representatives from the six ASEAN countries (Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Brunei) and an equal number of Canadian business representatives who will participate jointly in three events: an opening seminar, followed by attendance at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce annual meeting and visits to firms across Canada.

The seminar portion of the FORUM program will be focused on potential trade, investment and joint venture possibilities.

The Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney is the key note speaker at the Canadian Chamber of Commerce annual meeting to be held September 13-14 in Vancouver. ASEAN delegates will attend immediately following the seminar in Victoria.

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Between September 15 and 17, ASEAN representatives will visit firms in their particular areas of expertise. These individualized programs, which will take place in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario, have been organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Department of External Affairs, Canadian trade associations and companies active in these sectors.

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Ministère des Affaires extérieures

Canada

CANADA / ASEAN FORUM

September 10-17, 1986

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Department of External Affairs is announcing an initiative to foster improved economic links between Canada and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The Canada/ASEAN Forum brings together 25 private sector representatives from the six ASEAN countries (Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Brunei) and an equal number of Canadian business representatives.

Delegates are drawn from three industry sectors: oil and gas (equipment and services), mineral development (equipment, surveying and services) and telecommunications.

Starting in Victoria, British Columbia, the Forum features a seminar to discuss the policies and priorities of the ASEAN economies, strategies for the creation of more joint ventures, technology exchanges, licensing agreements and ASEAN capital projects of particular interest to Canadian industry.

After conclusion of the seminar, ASEAN participants will attend the annual meeting of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Vancouver, September 13-14. The Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, is giving the keynote address at this meeting.

Following a visit to EXPO 86, the ASEAN delegates separate on September 15 into three groups according to their industrial interests. These three groups will visit Canadian companies in British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. The tours have been organized by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with the Department of External Affairs, Canadian trade associations and private companies.

The Forum underlines the importance given by the Government to expanding market opportunities in the Pacific Rim area.

The ASEAN countries have proved to be the fastest-growing regional economy not only in the Pacific, but in the world. Annual ASEAN Gross Domestic Product growth rates averaged between 6 and 8% through the 1970s and early 1980s. In the past year, however, lower prices for energy products, depressed markets for commodity exports, slower world trade growth and increasing protectionism in the developed world have handicapped their economic performance.

Despite the current world economic slowdown, the relatively stable ASEAN economies present Canada with opportunities to expand trade relations. With the exception of the Philippines, growth projections remain solid at 3 to 4% annually to the end of the decade.

ASEAN countries are currently encouraging Canadian businessmen to explore trade and investment opportunities. At present, ASEAN's three traditional trading partners are the U.S., Japan and the European Community (EC), but Canada represents an attractive alternative supplier.

Canadian exports to ASEAN are principally resource products, capital goods, and materials to meet industrial processing and manufacturing requirements. These include metals, minerals, forestry and agricultural products and manufactured goods such as mining machinery, aircraft and telecommunications equipment. The three sectors chosen for the Forum are among the most promising for Canadian exporters.

Canada is a consumer of rubber, tin, tea and, other commodities which are among the ASEAN countries' major exports. Total two-way trade between Canada and the ASEAN was almost \$1.4 billion Cdn in 1985, placing ASEAN as Canada's eighth most important trading partner (ahead of France and Italy).

The Government's determination to consolidate existing Pacific Rim markets, and to expand into new ones, is expressed in the Pacific Rim Initiative, a major component of the National Trade Strategy. The Canada/ASEAN Forum, placing special emphasis on the fastest growing region within the Pacific Rim, is a step in this direction.