



# communiqué

N°:  
No.: 142

July 17, 1987.

## OPENING OF THE "MADE IN THAILAND TRADE SHOW '87"

The Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Right Honourable Joe Clark, today extended a warm welcome to the Thai Minister of Commerce, Montree Pongpanit, at the opening of the Made In Thailand Trade Show '87 at the Northlands Coliseum in Edmonton.

He noted that the relationship between Canada and Thailand had been growing steadily because of the strong commitment by both Governments to its expansion. This commitment has been underscored by the number of high level visits which have taken place between the two countries in the past several years. Her Excellency the Governor General Jeanne Sauvé and Madame Landry, Minister for External Relations, both visited Thailand this year. Canada was honoured last year by the visit of His Royal Highness, The Thai Crown Prince.

Minister Clark stated that the Trade Show mounted by the Thai Government was an excellent example of how to enhance the growing economic ties between the two countries. Canada was fully aware of the importance of trade, investment and industrial development to the vigour and vitality of the Canada-Thailand relationship and the Made in Thailand Trade Show would make a major contribution to its continued growth. Mr. Clark indicated his pleasure that the Show was taking place in his home province of Alberta. He noted that Canada has a competitive advantage in seeking a share of the Thai marketplace in the sectors of telecommunications, oil and gas, mining and food processing in which Alberta companies have an important stake. Alberta companies such as INTERA, TRIMAC-KENTING, GOPHER OIL, NOVA, AN ALBERTA CORP and TELECOM INTERNATIONAL are all active players in the Thai marketplace.

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The Minister emphasized, however, that Canada values its relationship with Thailand in all its aspects. He noted that the two countries share wide ranging and complementary interests, for example, in the security of the Asia-Pacific region and in cooperation to achieve a more open and fairer world trading system in the new MTN round, in particular in trade in agricultural and resource products. In addition both countries share common goals in relation to achieving peace and stability in Indochina, especially for Cambodia's future. The Minister stated that during his visit to Thailand two years ago he had an opportunity to fully appreciate the tremendous burden placed on Thailand in offering a temporary haven to thousands of Indo-Chinese refugees. Canada is proud, the Minister said, to be part of the multi-national response in providing humanitarian assistance and resettlement for some of those refugees. Canada has taken 110,000 refugees since 1975, of which Alberta has resettled over 15,000. The Minister further stated that Canada is a strong supporter of the Association of South East Asia Nations (ASEAN) of which Thailand is a key member. Mr. Clark noted that he has over the past three years attended Annual Ministerial Meetings with his ASEAN counterparts, most recently in Singapore last month.

The SSEA stated that the Canadian commitment to its relationship with ASEAN and Thailand was a direct result of the Government's decision to place a high priority on the Asia/Pacific region in the conduct of Canadian foreign policy. Canada's future economic prosperity was inextricably linked to the region and every opportunity was being taken to build upon the historical ties that Canada has across the Pacific.

In this respect Mr. Clark noted that it was during his term as Prime Minister in 1979 that the concept of an organization to act as a catalyst to broaden Canada's relations with the Pacific region was first put forward. The idea was carried forward by the the new Government in 1984 and as a result today the Asia/Pacific Foundation is a well established institution which serves to enhance the understanding of Canadians about the Pacific region. One of the Foundation's recent endeavours was to organize the successful Canada-Thai Trade and Investment Dialogue in Bangkok in December of last year.

Mr. Clark emphasized that as Secretary of State for External Affairs he has continued to seek ways to raise the profile of Canada in the Pacific in accordance with this thrust of Canadian foreign policy. In October 1985 he had established the Canadian National Committee on Pacific Economic Cooperation whose mandate is not only to guide Canada's participation in the ongoing

Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference, but also to stimulate awareness and interest within Canada about the Pacific region economy. The National Committee achieved both these objectives when it hosted the very successful Fifth Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference in Vancouver last year. The Minister indicated he attached particular importance to cooperation with the private sector to better ensure the development of Canada's economic links with the Pacific. The SSEA noted that he has met with various private sector groups such as the Pacific Basin Economic Council and the Canada-ASEAN Business Council to achieve this end.

Finally the Minister noted that he was instrumental in seeing that the importance of the Asia Pacific was reflected in Canada's National Trade Strategy. Under the National Trade Strategy Canada has committed a significant budget to help Canadian business develop new trade opportunities in Thailand and other important Asia Pacific countries.. Todate, market opportunity studies in telecommunications, food processing and mining in Thailand have been completed and distributed to the private sector and provincial governments. New studies in project procurement, computers, power and auto parts are in preparation to inform Canadian firms about other significant opportunities in the Thai marketplace. Mr. Clark noted that the strategy had also funded sector specific trade missions to Thailand and the hosting of ASEAN business decision-makers to Canada.

In conclusion, the SSEA noted that no economic relationship could be successful unless the flow of trade and investment was two-way. The Minister stated that Canada was committed to working with our Thai friends to achieve this important objective. He congratulated the Thai Government and Minister Montree on their initiative to put on a trade show of the calibre and scope of the one being opened today.