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SPEECH GIVEN BY THE
HONOURABLE ALLAN J. MACEachEN,
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
AT HIS MEETING WITH THE
FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST
ASIAN NATIONS,
BANGKOK,
JUNE 27, 1983

I am very pleased to be in Bangkok to attend these meetings of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers with the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN's Dialogue Partners. These sessions have become a traditional forum for ministerial discussions between Canada and ASEAN. I recall vividly the trip I made to the ASEAN countries the first time I served as Secretary of State for External Affairs in 1976. At that time, I announced in Jakarta that Canada would like to open a formal Dialogue with ASEAN, and it therefore gives me great pleasure to attend my first meeting.

Canada's growing relationship with ASEAN is a reflection of Canada's political commitment to the Association and its members. This commitment stems from the conviction that ASEAN is making a significant contribution to peace and stability in Southeast Asia, especially by its approach to the problem of Vietnam's continued occupation of Cambodia. Canada supports ASEAN in its initiatives to promote a settlement of this problem in accordance with the wishes of the international community as expressed in the Resolutions of the U.N. General Assembly and by the 1981 International Conference on Kampuchea. Canada shares the view of ASEAN that a settlement of the problem of Cambodia must ensure the right of the Khmer people to determine their own future free from outside interference.

ASEAN's contribution to the stability of Southeast Asia, indeed to the Asian and Pacific region as a whole, is also a result of the social and economic progress that has been made by ASEAN and its member countries. The ASEAN countries as a Third World success story represent a model not only for North-South cooperation but also for South-South cooperation. Despite recent setbacks caused by the world recession you have maintained rates of growth that are the envy of much of the developed world. Moreover, although faced with threats to your security, both from within the region and without, you have maintained your attachment to open and pluralistic societies. These strengths and the values embodied in your enduring traditional cultures have become the hallmark of ASEAN's international performance inviting respect and support from abroad.

For these reasons ASEAN has become important to Canada and has become a permanent feature of Canadian thinking on Asia and the Pacific. We do not make any important decisions about this region without taking full account of the views and interests of ASEAN. The problem of Cambodia and the related question of aid to Vietnam are cases in point. Thus, I can assure you that Canada will continue to support ASEAN in opposing Vietnamese challenges to the credentials of the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea in the United Nations. At the same time Canada will not support in either its bilateral programmes or through multilateral institutions the provision of economic assistance to Vietnam which would have the effect of subsidizing or rewarding Hanoi's continued military occupation of Cambodia.

The visit of Prime Minister Trudeau in January was designed to emphasize the importance of ASEAN to Canada and to underline for the Canadian public and the international community as a whole the enhanced political and economic stature of ASEAN. In this context Prime Minister Trudeau sought to reinforce Canada's role as a reliable friend of ASEAN, and as helping to bring about a better accommodation of the needs and wishes of the Third World.

A major objective of the Prime Minister's visit was the expansion of trade and economic relations with ASEAN. Thus, in each country the Prime Minister met with senior Canadian businessmen who were also able to meet political leaders and government officials in each ASEAN capital. We attach importance to this as it accomplishes the purpose of making Canadian capabilities better known in the region.

To further advance this objective the Minister of State for International Trade, Gerald Regan, led a trade mission to ASEAN in early May. This visit provided confirmation of the seriousness of Canada's intent to promote stronger ties with the ASEAN region. Mr. Regan's visit also stressed the importance of trade as a two-way street, both in export and investment. He had meetings with a variety of ministers, senior officials and heads of statutory bodies in each of the ASEAN countries. Like the visit of the Prime Minister before him, Mr. Regan's visit succeeded in providing access for Canadian businessmen to the highest levels of decision-making in the ASEAN countries and for this we are grateful. Your countries have been successful in blending

public and private sector ventures and in attracting foreign participation in the national development effort. That you seem more prepared to view Canada as a mature and logical partner in this process is no doubt a measure of the impact of the visits of both the Prime Minister and Mr. Regan.

On April 26 I opened the Inaugural Meeting of the Canada-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Committee, an event which I described as marking the maturing of a process in Canada's relations with ASEAN. The JCC discussions went a long way towards expanding the relationship beyond one narrowly defined on the basis of traditional development assistance although Canada reaffirmed its commitment to provide such assistance, now valued at \$5.1 million in operational projects with another \$7.5 million in planned projects which will be of benefit to ASEAN. The implementation of two further projects (thesecond phase of the Forest Tree Seed Centre and the possible creation of a Forest Products Utilization Centre) could raise the total value of Canadian projects benefitting ASEAN to some \$20 million over the next few years. Against this background it was satisfying to see the JCC exploring the possibility of cooperation in such diverse areas as science and technology, communications, museums, broadcasting development, specialized financial fields and cultural and journalist exchanges. The importance of several of these areas is that they offer the prospect of greater contact between the peoples of Canada and the ASEAN countries.

Canadian awareness of Asia and the Pacific is increasing steadily and over the past year we have taken several steps that will promote greater contact between the peoples of Canada and the Western Pacific. In March the government announced the formation of a Founding Committee to establish an Asia Pacific Foundation, a private institution that would be devoted to expanding the diverse range of Canadian interests in Asia and the Pacific through the stimulation and coordination of both new and existing activities. It is anticipated that the Foundation will also help to develop more widespread knowledge in Canada about the region and its importance to Canada.

This initiative to establish an Asia Pacific Foundation is an example of the increasingly tripartite nature of the Canadian approach to the region - an approach that combines government, private sector and the academic community. The Canadian private sector in particular is responding effectively to this approach and I would draw

your attention to the series of Pacific Rim Opportunities Conferences organized by the private sector, the latest of which is to be held in Calgary, Alberta in October. We are also endeavouring to strengthen cooperation in the Pacific by establishing a Canada-Pacific Cooperation Committee which brings together government with representatives of the private sector and the university community. This approach reflects our view that only through the full participation of the private sector can we develop the lasting economic ties that are essential to long-term interests. It is through this ever-increasing web of contacts that Canada-ASEAN awareness and mutual understanding will be enhanced.

I am here in Bangkok to further the process of contacts and communication that will build and strengthen understanding between Canada and ASEAN. These gatherings at the ministerial level have become in Canada's view not only the most important annual meeting of Asian and Pacific countries and their main partners, but also a significant North-South forum bringing together some of the key industrialized countries with a grouping of some of the most influential members of the Third World. The informality and frankness of these sessions have impressed me particularly. I can assure you that these meetings will continue to feature prominently on the annual agenda of Canada's important international political consultations.