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FIRST JOINT PLENARY MEETING OF ASEAN-CANADA BUSINESS COUNCIL

The Department of External Affairs announced today that the First Joint Plenary Meeting of the ASEAN-Canada Business Council (ACBC) was held in Manila on November 27-28, 1987. Over sixty senior Canadian business representatives and government officials were in attendance, with more than sixty-five delegates from the six member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)*.

The purpose of the ACBC Plenary meeting was to discuss two-way trade, the outlook for an increased flow of Canadian investments to the ASEAN, and common interests in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations.

Mary Collins, M.P. for Capilano, who attended the meeting as Special Representative of the Rt. Hon. Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, said during her keynote luncheon address: "Meetings such as this, combined with promotional efforts designed to bring private sector representatives of this region and Canada into more frequent contact, should provide the underpinning for expanded commercial and investment relations."

The ASEAN-Canada Business Council was established in December 1986 by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the ASEAN Chambers of Commerce and Industry to promote closer mutual understanding and increased business relationships between Canada and the ASEAN countries.

Participants in the First Joint Plenary Meeting concluded that there were substantial opportunities for increased Canada-ASEAN trade in the areas of agriculture; fisheries and forestry; energy and minerals; transport and communications; and tourism and tourism promotion. Both sides expressed a determination to continue working toward enhancing ASEAN-Canada economic and commercial relationships.

During her visit to the Philippines, Mary Collins reaffirmed the Canadian Government's support for the Administration of President Corazon Aquino. "The progress that President Aquino has achieved in her very short term of office has been remarkable" she said. "Mr. Clark has asked me to renew the pledge he gave President Aquino that Canada will continue seeking new ways in which we can contribute to the renewed stability and prosperity of the Philippines".

*ASEAN member countries include: Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Canada is a dialogue partner of the ASEAN countries.