

Eleventh Meeting of the Canada-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Committee

Montreal, Quebec, Canada, 6–7 May 1997

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

1. The Eleventh Meeting of the Canada-ASEAN Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) was held on 6–7 May 1997 in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The Canadian Delegation was led by Mr Marc-André Brault, Assistant Deputy Minister (Asia Pacific and Africa), Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT). Mrs Ingrid Hall, Director General, South and Southeast Asia Bureau, DFAIT, co-chaired the Meeting with Dato' Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, Director-General, ASEAN-Malaysia, who was the spokesman for the ASEAN Delegation.
2. On the occasion of the Twentieth Anniversary of the Canada-ASEAN Dialogue, the Meeting reviewed progress in the dialogue relationship, exchanged views on the forthcoming Denver Summit and the Vancouver APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, and on developments in ASEAN, ASEM, and the ASEAN Mekong Basin Development Cooperation and discussed measures to expand trade and investment linkages as well as development cooperation between ASEAN and Canada.
3. The Meeting was opened by Mr Marc-André Brault who in his opening statement drew attention to the fact that the ASEAN-Canada Business Council and the ASEAN ISIS Canada Bilateral were also meeting in Montreal simultaneously with the JCC to mark the Twentieth Anniversary of the Canada-ASEAN Dialogue. Mr Brault also noted that Canada had designated 1997 as Canada's Year of Asia Pacific to coincide with Canada's Chairmanship of APEC.
4. Dato Abdul Majid Ahmad Khan, in his opening statement, remarked on Canada's positive contribution to the Canada-ASEAN Cooperative Dialogue. He also outlined the progress made in the ASEAN economic cooperation since the 10th JCC Meeting. He called for a higher and more visible Canadian presence in the ASEAN region, further promotion of 2-way trade through greater trade facilitation and the strengthening of Canada-ASEAN development cooperation programmes.
5. The Meeting noted with satisfaction the growth of Canada-ASEAN trade and investment flows over the past twenty years. Bilateral trade grew from \$508 million in 1977 to \$7.9 billion in 1996, making ASEAN Canada's sixth largest export market in 1996 and fifth largest source of imports. The Meeting also greeted the success of the Team Canada trade missions to Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand led by the Right Honourable Jean Chrétien, Prime Minister of Canada, in 1996 and 1997. The meeting noted that tremendous opportunities still remain for increased trade and investment between Canada and ASEAN.

6. The co-chairs of the ASEAN-Canada Business Council (ACBC) Mr Yves Guérard, President and CEO of Sobeco, Ernst and Young, and Tan Sri Datuk Azizan Zainul Abidin, Chairman, PETRONAS, the Malaysian national petroleum corporation, reported on the success of the ACBC joint meeting held in Montreal, on 4–6 May 1997. This event brought together business representatives from Canada and ASEAN to discuss opportunities for trade and investment.

7. The Meeting reviewed the status of commercial, industrial and technological cooperation between Canada and ASEAN. Both sides expressed interest in improving market access for some of their products and services. The Meeting identified various sectors of interest to ASEAN in which Canada has expertise, such as environmental pollution technology, forest management, mining, biotechnology, food processing and packaging, remote sensing and satellite communications, and agreed to further explore ways of pursuing industrial and technological cooperation in these areas. Canada applauded the progress made by ASEAN countries in implementing new trade and investment liberalization measures in order to make ASEAN a more investor friendly region and to facilitate the conduct of business in ASEAN.

8. Canada presented the booklet “The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Twenty Years of Canadian Development Co-operation” which highlights the past and present ties between Canada and the ASEAN member countries. The meeting adopted the report of the Second Joint Planning and Monitoring Committee (JPMC) and acknowledged the importance of human resources development and capacity development for sustainable development. Special emphasis was placed on the growing role of women as vital contributors to their economies. The Meeting noted the successful conclusion of some projects which had contributed to the strengthening of ASEAN’s ability to deal with challenging national and regional forestry and fisheries issues. Several potential ASEAN-Canada initiatives will be explored in science and technology, environment, women in development, infrastructure services and assistance to ASEAN’s Program of HIV/AIDS Prevention. ASEAN and Canada’s programs of development cooperation in the Mekong Basin were discussed at the Meeting.

9. In reviewing the future direction of the Canada-ASEAN relationship, the Meeting took note of Canada’s desire for the revitalization of the JCC. For this purpose, the Meeting agreed to establish a Working Group based on terms of reference to be developed by Canada and Malaysia as Coordinator of the Canada-ASEAN Dialogue. The Working Group will make its recommendations prior to the next meeting of the JCC.