

Overview of ASEAN-Canada Dialogue Relations

1. The first formal meeting between ASEAN and Canada was held in February 1977. At the Meeting, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs informed the Chair of the ASEAN Standing Committee of Canada's proposal to extend a programme of development assistance to ASEAN. This commitment was later formalised in 1981 with the signing of the ASEAN-Canada Economic Cooperation Agreement (ACECA), which came into force on 1 June 1982.
2. The ACECA provided for industrial and commercial cooperation in addition to technical cooperation. It also established the ASEAN-Canada Joint Cooperation Committee to promote and review the various cooperation activities envisaged between ASEAN and Canada. In July 1993, a revised ACECA was signed, incorporating new areas of cooperation, including science and technology and environment policy networking, institution-building, organisational and management development programmes and efforts to stimulate private sector activities, market development and bilateral business cooperation, among others.
3. While the initial focus of the relationship was on development cooperation, it has now been expanded to cover a wide spectrum of areas under political-security, economic and socio-cultural cooperation. Cooperation has been undertaken through the framework of the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership (2010-2015) and its successor Plan of Action for the period of 2016-2020.
4. This year marks the 40th Anniversary of ASEAN and Canada Dialogue Relations, which coincides with ASEAN's golden jubilee and the 150th Anniversary of Canada's Confederation. Commemorative activities are being held throughout the year, including (i) the issuance of commemorative statements by the Prime Minister of Canada and ASEAN Leaders, (ii) the 40th Anniversary Logo Competition, (iii) reception hosted by the Ambassador of Canada to ASEAN and the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to ASEAN in February 2017 and (iv) Secretary-General of ASEAN's Visit to Canada upon the invitation of Global Affairs Canada in May 2017.

POLITICAL-SECURITY COOPERATION

ASEAN-Canada Mechanisms

5. High-level engagements between ASEAN and Canada have been established and institutionalised through different mechanisms, including the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Plus One (PMC+1) Session with Canada as well as the ASEAN-Canada Dialogue. The Committee of Permanent Representatives to ASEAN (CPR) and the Ambassador of Canada to ASEAN meet annually at the ASEAN-Canada Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) Meeting to review status of implementation of the ASEAN-Canada Plan of Action, with a focus on projects and programmes.

Canada' Accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)

6. Canada acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) in 2010 and to the Third Protocol Amending the TAC in 2011. This accession signifies Canada's commitment to engage ASEAN as a key partner in promoting regional peace and cooperation.

Establishment of Canada's Dedicated Mission to ASEAN

7. In February 2009, Canada appointed H.E. John T. Holmes as its first Ambassador to ASEAN, who was concurrently accredited to the Republic of Indonesia and the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste. H.E. Donald Bobiash succeeded Ambassador Holmes to assume this position on 2 May 2013 until he relinquished his post as Ambassador of Canada to ASEAN on 23 March 2016.

8. As part of its commitment to strengthen the relationship with ASEAN, Canada established a Mission to ASEAN, headed by H.E. Marie-Louise Hannan, the first dedicated Ambassador of Canada to ASEAN, who presented her credentials to the Secretary-General of ASEAN in March 2016.

Security Cooperation

9. Canada is one of the founding participants of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Since 1994, Canada has actively participated in activities and supported the work of the ARF in confidence building and preventive diplomacy, as well as in addressing traditional and non-traditional security threats such as transnational crime including terrorism and violent extremism, non-proliferation and disarmament, peacekeeping, cyber security, and maritime security, among others. In 2014-2017, Canada is co-chairing the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ISM on NPD) together with Malaysia and New Zealand.

10. Cooperation between ASEAN and Canada in combatting transnational crime and other non-traditional security issues have been conducted through the consultations between the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) and Canada. The 6th SOMTC + Canada Consultation took place on 26 May 2017 in Vientiane. ASEAN and Canada signed a Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism in Kuala Lumpur in July 2006. This Declaration has been implemented through various activities that both sides have undertaken under the ARF and Canada-ASEAN SOMTC frameworks. Canada has also provided support for ASEAN in this area through projects such as the "Improving Counter-Terrorism Investigations and International Collaboration in ASEAN Member States" (2014-2015) and "Improving ASEAN Preparedness to Address Emerging Terrorist Threats" (2015).

11. ASEAN and Canada have also collaborated in addressing other security issues arising from greater connectivity, such as through the initiative on "ASEAN Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar and Vietnam Borders Security Support (2015-2016) and the "Mitigation of Biological Threats in ASEAN Countries" project (2014-2017).

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Trade, Investment, and Tourism Statistics

12. ASEAN and Canada utilise the ASEAN Economic Ministers - Canada Consultations and the Senior Economic Officials Meeting (SEOM) - Canada Consultations to promote trade and investment flows between ASEAN and Canada, as well as to exchange views on a range of economic issues.

13. Canada remains one of ASEAN's strategic economic partner and both sides' partnership has grown and expanded positively over the years. Canada is ASEAN's eight largest trading partner with a total two-way trade in 2016 estimated at US\$ 12.05 billion.¹ Preliminary data shows that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Canada to ASEAN is registered at US\$ 295.93 million in 2016, making Canada ASEAN's eight largest source of FDI among the Dialogue Partners.²

Joint Declaration between ASEAN and Canada on Trade and Investment

14. Following the adoption of "the Joint Declaration between ASEAN and Canada on Trade and Investment" on 2 October 2011 in Jakarta, the First AEM-Canada Consultation adopted "the 2012-2015 Work Plan to Implement the ASEAN-Canada Trade and Investment Joint Declaration" on 31 August 2012 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. The Work Plan seeks to bolster commercial relations and enhance economic cooperation between ASEAN and Canada, focusing on three areas, namely: i) enhancing senior-level dialogue on trade and investment; ii) promoting increased trade and investment between ASEAN and Canada; and iii) increasing private sector's involvement in promoting trade and investment. The successor Work Plan (2016-2020), which was adopted by the Ministers at the 4th AEM-Canada Consultations on 25 August 2015 in Kuala Lumpur is currently being implemented.

15. The first-ever AEM Roadshow to Canada was held on 2-5 June 2014, during which the ASEAN delegates learned from Canada's achievements, experiences and expertise in a wide range of areas, including in energy, transportation, finance, public-private partnership (PPP) and promotion of innovation. The Roadshow also provided great opportunities for ASEAN to promote the ASEAN Economic Community as a recommended destination for Canada's trade and investment.

16. During the 5th AEM-Canada Consultations in August 2016, ASEAN and Canada agreed to: (i) establish an annual ASEAN-Canada Trade Policy Dialogue (TPD) and (ii) develop the draft TOR of a feasibility study on a potential ASEAN-Canada FTA. These two initiatives are currently being carried out –the inaugural ASEAN-Canada TPD was held in July 2017 in Manila while the preliminary draft of the feasibility study on a potential ASEAN-Canada FTA will be presented at the upcoming AEM-Canada Consultation in September 2017.

¹ ASEAN Trade Database as of July 2017

² ASEAN FDI Database as of July 2017

Canada-ASEAN Business Council (CABC)

17. The Canada-ASEAN Business Council (CABC) was established at the First AEM-Canada Consultation on 31 August 2012. The CABC aims to promote business opportunities and build business networks between the two sides. The CABC has conducted a number of activities to increase Canadian private sector's engagement with ASEAN, including the two Canada-ASEAN Business Forums held in Singapore in October 2013, and in Bangkok in March 2014, respectively. As the CABC develops its partnership with the ASEAN Business Advisory Council, it has also been expanding linkages with other ASEAN-wide business associations and participating in the annual ASEAN Business and Investment Summit.

18. The Global Affairs Canada conducted a Business Opportunities in Southeast Asia Infrastructure Roadshow seminar series to three Canadian cities from 30 November to 4 December 2015, namely Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto. The Roadshow was designed to present some of the market and export opportunities for Canadian companies in ASEAN in line with Canadian company capabilities in the sustainable infrastructure space, including in the areas of renewable energy and smart grid infrastructure, transportation (rail and airport), water and wastewater solutions, and engineering and technical consulting services.

Energy Cooperation

19. ASEAN and Canada are also working to strengthen cooperation in energy, including through the development of renewable and alternative energy sources and the promotion of clean energy technology. Canada and Singapore successfully co-organised an ASEAN-Canada Renewable Energy Seminar during the Singapore International Energy Week in October 2014. Canada is providing CAD 500,000 for a two-year period (March 2016-March 2018) to support the ASEAN Centre for Energy (ACE) with nuclear and radiological security for the civilian use of nuclear energy.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development

20. Canada is supporting the implementation of the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) 2016-2025 through a five-year CAD 12 million investment through the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (February 2016-December 2020). This project aims to enable SMEs development across ASEAN through more effective and coordinated SMEs policies and link SMEs into regional and global value chains, for a more integrated, competitive, resilient, and innovative ASEAN Economic Community.

Agricultural Cooperation and the Grow Asia Initiative (2015-2018)

21. Canada is also supporting ASEAN in promoting inclusive and sustainable agriculture through the Grow Asia Initiative, in collaboration with the World Economic Forum (WEF), with a funding commitment of CAD 4.5 million for the period of 2015-2018. This is a multi-stakeholder project that involves the private sector in specific value chains collaboration in line with ASEAN's food security objectives.

SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

22. Canada has contributed to the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER). It supported the ASEAN Secretariat in the people-centred development of a five-year Work Programme for AADMER. Canada has also launched a CAD 10 million Integrated Disaster Risk Management (IDRM) Trust Fund to reduce the impact of disasters through technical assistance.

23. On climate change, Canada is supporting a project on “International Research Initiative on Adaptation to Climate Change”. The project, which was initiated in 2011 for a period of 72 months, focuses on Coastal Cities at Risk (CCaR) and is designed to develop the knowledge base and enhance the capacity of mega-cities in Canada and Southeast Asia to successfully adapt to and cope with risks posed by the effects of climate change.

24. On health and pandemic preparedness and response, Canada provided support to the CAREID project (2008-2012) to reduce the threat of emerging infectious diseases (EID) such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and avian influenza to human security, regional stability, and sustainable development in Southeast Asia. Under the ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership Programme (ACEPP), Canada is providing a CAD\$6-million project on “Mitigation of Biological Threats in ASEAN Countries (2014-2017) to accelerate the implementation of the work plans of the ASEAN Expert Group on Communicable Diseases (AEGCD) and ASEAN Working Group on Pandemic Preparedness Response (AWGPPR).

25. Canada has also been an active supporter of ASEAN's efforts in promoting the rights of women, children and migrant workers through various completed and on-going projects, including: i) Improving Women's Human Rights in Southeast Asia (2011-2016) via UN Women; ii) ASEAN Women's Dialogue: Enhancing the Role of Women in the Working System of Governance; iii) Regional Mechanisms to Protect the Human Rights of Women and Girls in Southeast Asia (2010-2014); and iv) Tripartite Action for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers (TRIANGLE) Project (2012-2016).

Connectivity

26. Apart from cooperation in support of the three pillars of the ASEAN Community, Canada has also provided support for ASEAN in enhancing its connectivity through the “Asian Infrastructure Centre of Excellence”, in collaboration with Singapore and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Canada and Singapore co-organised a Connectivity Seminar in March 2013, to which all ASEAN Member States were invited. Another ASEAN-Canada Seminar on “Enhancing Connectivity through Public-Private Partnership” was held on 10 April 2014 at the ASEAN Secretariat.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

27. ASEAN-Canada development cooperation has been undertaken in various areas under the Plan of Action to Implement the Joint Declaration on ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership (2010-2015) and its successor Plan of Action (2016-2020).

28. The ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership Programme (ACEPP) was established in April 2013 with the total funding commitment of CAD 10 million to support the implementation of ASEAN-Canada Plan of Action for the period of 2013-2015. Three projects have been identified under this Programme, namely: i) Mitigation of Biological Threats in ASEAN Countries (2014-2017); ii) Improving Counter-Terrorism Investigations and International Collaboration in ASEAN Member States (2014-2015); and iii) Toronto Centre Project on Financial Regulations.

29. Canada provided CAD 1.3 million information management software named "ASEAN Online", a product of OpenText Canada, to the ASEAN Secretariat to enhance its information management and documentation work. The ASEAN Online was launched at the Second ASEAN-Canada JCC held on 10 April 2014 at the ASEAN Secretariat and ended the service in April 2016.

