

Overview of ASEAN-Canada Dialogue Relations

1. The ASEAN-Canada dialogue relationship was established in February 1977 with the convening of the first formal meeting between the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs and the ASEAN Standing Committee. In 1981, the ASEAN-Canada Economic Cooperation Agreement (ACECA) was signed, laying the grounds for industrial, commercial, and technical cooperation between the two sides.
2. While the initial focus of the relationship was on development cooperation, it has now been expanded to cover a wide spectrum of areas under the three community pillars. Following the adoption of the Joint Declaration on the ASEAN-Canada Enhanced Partnership at the ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference Plus One (PMC+1) Session with Canada in July 2009, ASEAN and Canada have completed their plans of action for the periods of 2010-2015, 2016-2020, and 2021-2025. The new Plan of Action (2026-2030) is expected to be adopted in 2026.
3. ASEAN and Canada convened a Commemorative Summit to mark the 40th anniversary of the dialogue relations on 14 November 2017 in Manila. It was the first Leaders' meeting since the establishment of the partnership in 1977. Both sides also convened a Commemorative Summit to mark the 45th anniversary of the ASEAN-Canada Dialogue Relations in November 2022 in Phnom Penh, which adopted the Joint Statement on the ASEAN-Canada Commemorative Summit.
4. The ASEAN-Canada Summit convened on 6 September 2023 officially launched the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership, whereby ASEAN and Canada will closely collaborate in strategic areas of mutual interest. The partnership will continue building on the Plan of Action to Implement the ASEAN-Canada Strategic Partnership (2026-2030) and support the ASEAN 2045: Our Shared Future as well as the implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

POLITICAL-SECURITY COOPERATION

5. Canada appointed its first Ambassador to ASEAN in 2009 and established a Mission to ASEAN in 2016, headed by its first dedicated Ambassador to ASEAN, H.E. Marie-Louise Hannan, assumed the position in March 2016 and ended her tenure in September 2018. The current Ambassador of Canada to ASEAN is H.E. Ambra Dickie, who assumed the position in August 2025.
6. Canada acceded to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) on 23 July 2010 in Hanoi, Viet Nam, and subsequently to the Third Protocol Amending the TAC on 23 July 2011 in Bali, Indonesia.

7. Political and security engagements between ASEAN and Canada continue to be strengthened on multiple fronts through Canada's participation in various ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Plus Canada Senior Officials' Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) Consultation.

8. Under the ambit of the ARF, Canada has actively participated in various activities focusing on confidence-building measures, preventive diplomacy, counter-terrorism and other transnational crime, peacekeeping operations, non-proliferation and disarmament as well as disaster relief. During the Inter-Sessional Year (ISY) 2024-2025, Canada co-chaired the 6th ARF Workshop on Implementing UNCLOS and other International Instruments to Address Emerging Maritime Issues, alongside Viet Nam, Australia, the European Union and New Zealand in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, on 17 March 2025, and ARF Workshop to Recognise 25 Years of Women, Peace, and Security, with Viet Nam and Australia in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, on 25 March 2025. Canada also co-chairs the ARF Inter-Sessional Meetings on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies (2024–2026) with the Philippines.

9. Both sides' commitment to combat transnational crimes and terrorism is also pursued through the SOMTC + Canada Consultation and the delivery of Canada's multi-year concrete projects in all ASEAN Member States. To date, 14 SOMTC + Canada Consultation have been convened, with the last meeting held virtually on 18 June 2026.

10. Canada continues to support the advancement of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda in the region through the Regional Programme on *Empowering Women for Sustainable Peace: Preventing Violence and Promoting Social Cohesion in ASEAN – Advancing WPS in ASEAN*, as well as a series of WPS Dialogues in 2024, which have supported the implementation of the *ASEAN Regional Plan of Action (RPA) on WPS*.

11. Canada remains committed to support ASEAN Centrality in the evolving regional architecture, including through the implementation of its new Indo-Pacific Strategy. In 2022, Canada was admitted as Observer in the ADMM-Plus Experts' Working Groups (EWGs) on Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) as well as Maritime Security (MS) for the final year of the 2021-2023 cycle. At the 18th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) in Vientiane, Lao PDR on 20 November 2024, Canada was granted Observership status in the same two ADMM-Plus EWGs for the 2024-2027 cycle. It has also indicated its interest to become a strategic partner of ASEAN, join the East Asia Summit (EAS), and take part in the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF).

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

12. Economic engagement between ASEAN and Canada is guided by the ASEAN-Canada Joint Declaration on Trade and Investment (JDTI), which was signed on 2 October 2011. JDTI Work Plan (2021-2025) was endorsed by the 9th ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM)-Canada Consultations on 29 August 2020, and its successor JDTI Work

Plan (2026-2030) was endorsed at the 14th AEM-Canada Consultation on 26 September 2025. ASEAN Statistics shows that two-way trade between ASEAN and Canada in 2025 stood at USD 28 billion,¹ and that the foreign direct investment (FDI) in flows from Canada to ASEAN amounted to USD 3.23 billion in 2025.² Meanwhile, the number of tourist arrivals from Canada in ASEAN in 2025 accounted for 1,177,471 persons.³

13. The ASEAN Economic Ministers (AEM) Meeting and ASEAN Senior Economic Officials' Meeting (SEOM) hold regular dialogue with Canada. The Canada-ASEAN Business Council (CABC), established at the 1st AEM-Canada Consultation on 31 August 2012 to promote business opportunities and build business network between the two sides, has now comprised of more than 50 companies conducting business in the region. The CABC has incorporated its first Canadian Office and established its Women's Leadership Committee in April 2018. In 2024, CABC institutionalised Canada's presence in the ASEAN Community by becoming an entity accredited to ASEAN.

14. Economic engagement between ASEAN and Canada has been further strengthened through continuous dialogues and collaborative initiatives. The ASEAN-Canada Trade Policy Dialogue (TPD), established in 2016, serves as a platform for both parties to discuss trade policy areas of mutual interest. The TPD sessions have addressed various topics, including support for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), experiences in negotiating Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), and intellectual property rights to drive innovation. These discussions have contributed to a more robust and modern trade relationship between ASEAN and Canada.

15. The ASEAN-Canada Free Trade Agreement (ACAFTA) negotiations have made significant progress since their official launch in 2021. The 12th AEM-Canada Consultation, held on 20 August 2023 in Semarang, Indonesia, ratified a new target to substantially conclude the ACAFTA negotiations by 2025. Subsequently, the 13th AEM-Canada Consultation, convened on 20 September 2024 in Vientiane, Lao PDR, welcomed the progress made and urged officials to intensify efforts to expedite the negotiations. The 14th AEM-Canada Consultation, held on 26 September 2025 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, agreed to extend the timeline for substantial conclusion to as early as possible in 2026.

SOCIO-CULTURAL COOPERATION

16. Cooperation between ASEAN and Canada in the socio-cultural front remains a priority. Canada has supported ASEAN's efforts in building a people-oriented, people-centered Community through its various capacity building and development programmes.

¹ ASEAN Statistics, IMTS data as of 13 March 2026.

² ASEAN Statistics, FDI data as of 29 April 2026.

³ ASEAN Statistics. Preliminary tourism data as of 28 April 2026.

17. In the area of promotion and protection of the rights of women and children, Canada supported the development of the Work Plans (2021-2025) of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) as well as the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW), which have been finalised and subsequently endorsed at the Ministerial level in October 2021 and March 2022, respectively. In 2023-2024, Canada supported the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA) in their efforts to increase women's political participation in the region, through the development of a Plan of Action on the Promotion of Women's Political Participation (2024-2028).

18. In the area of promotion and protection of migrant workers, Canada supported ASEAN's regional efforts in strengthening policies and programmes to protect and promote the rights of migrant workers, particularly women, through the *Tripartite Action for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers in the ASEAN Region (TRIANGLE in ASEAN) Phase II* project amounting to a total of CAD 9.5 million.

19. Canada also continues to support the development of human capital in Southeast Asia especially through the Canada-ASEAN Scholarships and Educational Exchanges for Development (SEED) initiative which was launched in August 2017. Since its inception, the SEED programme has provided more than 1000 scholarships to ASEAN students to study or undertake research in Canada.

20. Canada has been supporting ASEAN in disaster management by assisting the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre) and ASEAN Member States in strengthening their capacity in disaster prevention and mitigation. Through the Integrated Disaster Risk Management Fund worth CAD 10 million, Canada continues to support ASEAN in implementing the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER) 2020-2025 Work Programme and its successor 2026–2030 Work Programme.

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

21. Cooperation between ASEAN and Canada continues to contribute to the overall development goals of ASEAN in all three pillars as well as supported ASEAN's efforts in narrowing the development gap. Canada has been participating in the regular Consultation Meeting of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) Task Force-ASEAN Partners since 2016. Canada continues to support ASEAN in the area of connectivity, including through its participation in the annual ASEAN Connectivity Coordinating Committee (ACCC) Consultations with Dialogue Partners (DPs) and other External Partners (OEPs) on Connectivity, ASEAN Connectivity Symposium, as well as workshops on the Implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC) 2025.

22. With a view to support future sustainable development, the ASEAN-Canada Plan of Action Trust Fund was formally established in March 2023 with an initial contribution of CAD 1,000,000. To date, Canada has contributed CAD 9 million out of the pledged contribution of CAD 11.7 million to the Trust Fund. In addition to supporting cooperation projects, the fund will also be utilised for the establishment of the Project Management Team and the identification of sub-projects for funding.
