



**CANADA-IN-ASIA
CONFÉRENCE
CANADA-EN-ASIE**
Singapore 2026 Singapour

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Act decisively in a fragmented global economy

The current geopolitical and economic environment demands proactive engagement. Building concrete partnerships in Canada–Asia ecosystems based on shared long-term growth objectives can contribute to supply chain resilience and economic security.

Leverage Canada’s broad energy strengths for near-term demand in Asia

Asia’s demand for energy is continuing to expand, and Canada is strongly placed to be a provider of choice of both conventional and clean energy. Expanding oil and gas exports from Canada to customers in Asia can help improve the security of supply to economies across the region. Enhancing co-operation on clean energy supply chains, particularly nuclear and critical minerals, will respond to key Asian demand.

Building partnerships in nuclear and critical minerals for electrification

Asia’s rapid electrification and energy diversification create strong demand for Canadian expertise in grid modernization, critical minerals, and nuclear innovation. Collaboration on the nuclear file — including in legal and regulatory frameworks, technology and innovation, and workforce capacities — can position Canada as a key partner as economies in Southeast Asia move to embrace nuclear energy. Building Canadian contributions to global and Asia-connected critical minerals supply chains — incorporating mining, processing, and refining as well as financing — can contribute to the region’s electrification trend.

Scale Canadian agriculture ambition beyond North America

With Asia facing arable land constraints amid expanding food demand, there is a compelling case for supercharging deeper Canada–Asia agri-food co-operation. Expanding trade in commodities and plant-based proteins, leveraging Canada’s sustainable agriculture excellence, and strengthening supply chains can enhance food security in Asia while generating mutual economic benefits.

Invest in infrastructure for the digital and urban future

Asia’s growth is driven by urbanization, smart cities, and AI infrastructure, all of which require massive investment in energy and transport systems. Canadian finance, engineering, advisory, and governance expertise can play a critical role in delivering sustainable, resilient, and transparent infrastructure projects.

FEBRUARY 10-11, 2026 | SINGAPORE

Where Canada and Asia Meet:

Ideas, Investment, Impact



OPENING PLENARY:

Understanding Major Economic Trends and Canada-Asia Opportunities

01

SPEAKERS

Moderator



Neha Noronha

Unit Head, Trade & Supply Chain Division, South Asia, Private Sector Operations Department, Asian Development Bank, Singapore-based



Sue-Ern Tan

Head, Regional Cooperation Office, International Energy Agency, Singapore-based



Anuj Maheshwari

Head, Agri-Food, Temasek, Singapore-based



Frank Lin

Managing Director of Asian Regions, WSP, Taiwan-based

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CIAC2026 opened with a plenary session that examined high-level global and Asia-specific trends shaping opportunities for Canadian companies and institutions across the Indo-Pacific region in energy, food and infrastructure. Discussion was grounded in a recognition that — in large part in response to the uncertainty caused by the Trump administration’s unprecedented tariffs — strategic interests in national defence and security, geopolitical influence, and co-operation on global public goods are today inseparable from economic security and the resilience that only comes from building diversified supply chains with trusted partners. In a world now defined by fragmentation, uncertainty, and rapid structural change, the opportunity for deeper Canada–Asia collaboration is now more welcome and attractive on both sides of the Pacific than ever before, particularly in energy, food systems, and infrastructure.

While global electricity demand is expanding 2.5 times faster than total energy demand, Southeast Asia is electrifying at an even more rapid pace, with renewables supplying an increasing amount of the region’s electricity, and nuclear likely to do so in the future. While oil and gas will remain important contributors to the region’s energy mix for decades, the unmistakable trend is toward electrification, with heightened risk to national and regional energy security, positioning Canada as a valuable partner in supporting Asia’s transition to secure and sustainable energy systems, particularly in LNG, critical minerals, grid systems, and small modular reactors.

Food security discussions underscored Asia’s constraints — it holds 60 per cent of the global population but only 30 per cent of arable land — with Canada as a natural partner possessing abundant agricultural and freshwater resources. This

creates natural partnership opportunities, particularly in supplying increasing protein demand as the middle classes expand throughout Asia, advancing sustainable agriculture, and strengthening agri-food supply chains.



“It’s really important in all of this uncertainty to not become caught in inaction and hesitancy. This is an opportunity for us to take action together, to continue to work in a global multilateral context and find an opportunity to ensure that we do deliver secure, affordable, and reliable electricity in the years to come.”

– Sue-Ern Tan, Head, Regional Cooperation Office, International Energy Agency

Infrastructure trends — including urbanization, smart cities, and AI-driven data centre expansion — are accelerating demand for energy and capital investment across Asia. Canadian firms bring strengths in engineering, governance, and sustainable project delivery, but must navigate diverse regulatory environments when scaling their global ambitions.

Ultimately, the panel stressed that collaboration advances interests in economies across Asia and Canada and that food, energy, and infrastructure are sectors in which Canada and Asia share complementary strengths. Unlocking potential will require bold investment, deep partnerships, and a shift from dialogue to decisive action.

Note: This session took place before the Middle East conflict started on February 28, 2026.



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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Diversification is no longer optional — it is urgent

Canadian businesses must move beyond overreliance on the U.S. market and actively pursue Indo-Pacific opportunities. While barriers such as distance, regulatory complexity, and cultural differences remain, the U.S. government's upending of the global trading system means that the U.S. is an unreliable partner.

New arrangements and agreements for a post-rules-based trade world

The weakening of the WTO and the rise of unilateral trade actions signal a shift toward power-based trade dynamics. Businesses and policymakers are adapting to uncertainty in which geopolitical considerations increasingly shape market access, investment decisions, and supply chain strategies.

Strengthen SMEs and inclusive trade capacity

Small and medium-sized enterprises — particularly those predominantly employing women in the developing world — are most vulnerable to trade disruptions. Targeted capacity-building and enacting gender provisions in trade agreements that give attention to how women are impacted by trade can help SMEs navigate complex global markets and remain competitive.

Leverage innovation, data, and digital trade tools

Emerging technologies such as AI and digital trade systems offer opportunities to reduce friction in global commerce. Tools like predictive border management and improved data systems can enhance efficiency and resilience, but governments must close data gaps and modernize regulatory frameworks to fully realize these benefits.

Deepen Canada-Asia collaboration through talent mobility and climate-focused finance

Opportunities for collaboration include areas critical to Asian economies' competitiveness and ability to withstand trade shocks, including climate financing through blended finance models and talent mobility, especially with South Asia. Canadian institutions can contribute to collaborative efforts by aligning expertise in sustainability, innovation, and governance with Asia's development and resilience needs.

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Where Canada and Asia Meet:

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Pursuing Economic Security Amid Global Trade Disorder

02

SPEAKERS

Moderator



The Hon. Lisa Raitt

Co-Chair, Coalition for a Better Future, Canada-based



Bart Édes

Professor of Practice, McGill University; Distinguished Fellow, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Canada-based



Stephen Olson,

Visiting Fellow, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies - Yusof Ishak Institute, National University of Singapore, Singapore-based



Amitendu Palit

Senior Research Fellow & Research Lead (Trade & Economic Policy), Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, Singapore-based

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The “Pursuing Economic Security Amid Global Trade Disorder” plenary session brought together three scholars to discuss their research on challenges and opportunities in the contemporary trade environment in a Canada-Asia context, as commissioned by Canada’s International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Amitendu Palit’s research focused on trade- and tariff-related challenges in South Asia, particularly decarbonization and skilling, while Stephen Olson addressed challenges faced by Southeast Asian economies. Bart Édes addressed Canada-Asia trade from a Canadian point of view.

The session explored how rising geopolitical tensions, protectionism, and the erosion of the rules-based trading system are reshaping global economic security. Speakers emphasized that the current environment is not a temporary disruption but a structural shift, requiring governments and businesses — especially in Canada — to rethink long-standing assumptions about trade, risk, and global integration.

A central theme was the urgent need for trade diversification. Canada’s historic reliance on the United States is no longer sustainable in an era of tariffs, unpredictability, and geopolitical rivalry. The Indo-Pacific, particularly South and Southeast Asia, presents significant opportunities, but also heightened complexity due to supply chain vulnerabilities and unique domestic effects of U.S. tariffs.

Panellists highlighted the awakening of a highly transactional, power-driven trade environment and the resultant decline of multilateral trade institutions such as the WTO. Southeast Asia faces mounting pressure from U.S.-China competition, while South Asia grapples with structural

vulnerabilities, including climate risks, skills gaps, and exposure to trade shocks affecting labour-intensive industries, especially in sectors that employ predominantly women.

“The wake-up call, which had not been heard, is now heard. [U.S. tariffs have] affected other countries. And those countries are looking to countries like Canada that want to do business, establish new relationships, and reduce their dependence on what right now is an unpredictable trade partner.”

– Bart Édes, Professor of Practice, McGill University and Distinguished Fellow, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

Despite these challenges, opportunities remain. New trade agreements, digital trade innovations, talent mobility, and blended finance mechanisms offer pathways to resilience. Canada’s strengths in stable governance, talent attraction, and sectoral expertise — including in energy, critical minerals, and innovation — position it as a valuable partner in a volatile world.

The session underscored a clear message: economic security now depends on agility, diversification, and collaboration. In this might-makes-right economic context, smart Canada-Asia partnerships can offer a bulwark against economic uncertainty and predatory trade practices by the most powerful states.

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Recognize the 'two Chinas' when shaping strategy

China today is simultaneously a global innovation leader and an economy facing deep structural challenges. Policymakers and businesses should avoid one-dimensional views and instead engage with this dual reality (i.e. balancing opportunities in advanced sectors with caution around economic volatility and uneven domestic conditions).

Do not underestimate China's long-term strategic capacity

China's track record in executing long-term industrial strategies — particularly in critical sectors such as clean energy, critical minerals, and rare earths — demonstrates significant state capacity. Canadian and Asian partners should plan for a China that remains a formidable competitor and collaborator, rather than assuming stagnation or decline.

China's strength amid global trade reconfiguration

China's ability to redirect exports away from the U.S. and generate a record trade surplus despite tariffs illustrates the limits of traditional trade pressure tools. Countries across Asia, Europe, and beyond should navigate both the benefits and disruptions of Chinese industrial scale, while strengthening their own economic resilience.

Middle powers: pursue pragmatic, flexible, interest-driven approaches

As Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney outlined in his speech in Davos in January, countries can no longer rely on fixed alliances or trading relationships that defined the post-Second World War order. Instead, pragmatic, issue-based alignment — working with China where interests converge — will define effective engagement in a more fragmented global order.

Domestic structural challenges in China create both risks and openings

Weak consumption, demographic decline, and a struggling real estate sector will shape China's economic trajectory. These pressures may constrain growth but also incentivize policy shifts — creating opportunities for foreign partners in areas such as services, innovation, and consumption-driven sectors if reforms materialize.

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03

GALA DINNER:

Conversation with Jonathan Cheng, China Bureau Chief, The Wall Street Journal

SPEAKERS

Moderator



Vina Nadjibulla

Vice-President, Research and Strategy, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Canada-based



Jonathan Cheng

China Bureau Chief, Wall Street Journal, China-based

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The gala dinner conversation between Jonathan Cheng, *The Wall Street Journal's* China Bureau Chief, and Vina Nadjibulla, APF Canada's Vice-President of Research and Strategy, offered candid perspectives on China's evolving economic and geopolitical trajectory. Drawing on his experience reporting from Beijing, Cheng described a society, economy, and political system in which uncertainty, contradiction, and global significance coexist to great consequence, where rapid modernization coexists with tightening political control.

A central insight was the notion of 'Two Chinas.' On one hand, a globally competitive powerhouse leading in sectors such as electric vehicles, batteries, and clean technology; on the other, an economy grappling with structural challenges, including youth unemployment, a prolonged real estate downturn, and declining social mobility. This duality creates both resilience and fragility, complicating external perceptions and policy responses.

The discussion also underscored China's strategic pivot toward technological self-sufficiency and long-term resilience, particularly in sectors tied to both economic growth and national security. While short-term economic headwinds persist, Beijing appears focused on positioning itself for a more contested global future and either leading, or close to the front of the pack, in sectors that have applications in the realm of hard power.

Trade tensions — especially with the United States — were framed not as episodic disputes but as part of a broader reordering of global trade. China's

ability to redirect exports and leverage critical supply chains, such as rare earths, highlights its structural advantages, even as overcapacity and global pushback pose risks. Yet while the Trump administration's global tariffs led to China's record trade surplus of US\$1.2 trillion in 2025, Cheng believes Beijing is showing signs of being responsive to trading partners' potential vulnerabilities by not over-leveraging its export dominance.

“

There are really two Chinas right now... you have a China that is more confident than it has been in years... But there's another reality too, which is very much real, which is that youth unemployment is very high, which is that the real estate market has been in the dumps and has been for years, and the outlook doesn't look too much better.”

– Jonathan Cheng, China Bureau Chief, Wall Street Journal

For Canada and other middle powers, Cheng argued that effectively engaging China requires nuance, realism, and a willingness to navigate complexity, recognizing both China's enduring strengths and its internal constraints. Cheng's closing thought: "Anyone would underestimate China at their own peril."

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Infrastructure now means systems, not just structures

Future-ready infrastructure includes energy grids, digital platforms, cyber resilience, water systems, airports, AI networks, and urban data systems. Governments and investors should broaden their definition of infrastructure to capture the technologies and services that underpin security, productivity, and quality of life.

Canada's commercial strategy in Asia must be demand-led, not supply-led

Multiple speakers — and a member of the audience — emphasized that success in Asian markets depends first and foremost on understanding local priorities and developing specialized products and services rather than marketing existing solutions developed at home. Discussion emphasized opportunities such as waste-to-energy, biomethane, sustainable aviation fuel, and localized clean energy solutions that could be ripe for Canadian partners to co-design solutions.

Blended finance can help unlock major projects

Large infrastructure projects often stall at the high-risk early stage. Institutions that facilitate and provide different types of early-stage financing, such as Indonesia Infrastructure Finance and FinDev Canada as well as multilateral financial institutions, can bridge the early-stage gap, thereby making large scale project more attractive to private sector investors.

Talent mobility, university partnerships are important in infrastructure ecosystems

As infrastructure becomes more technology-intensive, access to researchers and skilled workers — both domestically and internationally — will be crucial components for operational efficiency and success. Universities can accelerate progress by serving as neutral testing grounds, innovation hubs, and conveners linking government, industry, and startups.

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Where Canada and Asia Meet:

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MORNING PLENARY:

Strategic Infrastructure for a Fragmented Future: Climate, Security and Technology at a Crossroads

SPEAKERS

Moderator



Kristin Baetz

Dean, Faculty of Science,
University of Calgary,
Canada-based



Rizki Hasan

CEO, Indonesia
Infrastructure Finance,
Indonesia-based



Paulo Martelli

Chief Investment
Officer, FinDev Canada,
Canada-based



Cheryl Chan

Group Chief Strategy and
Sustainability Officer and
President, New Ventures,
ST Engineering,
Singapore-based

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The panel "Strategic Infrastructure for a Fragmented Future: Climate, Security and Technology at a Crossroads" framed infrastructure as a new frontline of economic competitiveness, resilience, and international co-operation. Speakers argued that with the world increasingly shaped by geopolitical shocks, supply-chain disruptions, and climate pressures, our conception of infrastructure goes beyond hard assets such as roads, ports, and pipelines to include digital systems, cybersecurity, energy grids, water treatment, and talent ecosystems.

Ontario's Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, Vic Fedeli, set the tone by stressing that diversification is no longer optional for Canada, but essential, with Asia emerging as a critical partner for trade, investment, and long-term cooperation.

Panellists highlighted the contributions of their institutions and companies to developing strategic infrastructure. Indonesia Infrastructure Finance catalyzes de-risking early-stage projects in Indonesia while inviting global partners into Indonesia's next wave of growth. FinDev Canada demonstrated how its development finance can align commercial returns with climate and social outcomes, citing a recent investment in renewable energy in Thailand as an example. And ST Engineering illustrated how smart mobility, cybersecurity, aerospace innovation, and urban management systems are redefining infrastructure delivery globally.

A recurring theme was that successful Canada-Asia partnerships should begin with listening. Rather than exporting ready-made solutions, participants urged Canadian organizations to understand Asia's real needs — from waste-to-energy systems and sustainable aviation fuel to dynamic energy management and smart-city integration. Universities were also positioned as critical partners, not only for research, but as 'living labs' where governments and companies can test technologies at scale.



There are a lot of projects in Indonesia [connected to] the government's plan for energy security, food security. One big area is waste-to-energy projects, and that's ... open for Canadian investors to come in. We believe that Canada can bring technology and capital. And for any investor coming to Indonesia, you need a local partner and Indonesia Infrastructure Finance can play that role."

– Rizki Hasan, CEO, Indonesia Infrastructure Finance

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Universities are important drivers of economic growth

Universities are hubs for primary research, research & development, innovation and entrepreneurship. Institutions such as the University of Alberta and NTU are reshaping their contributions to catalyzing economic growth by launching venture funds, dedicated commercialization offices, and industry-facing partnerships.

Everyone wins when the gap closes between research and entrepreneurs

Barriers to effective research-entrepreneur collaboration include language and culture — not the differences between English or Mandarin or French or Hindi, but the ability for researchers and entrepreneurs to understand and operate in each other's worlds. Universities become more relevant in this environment with clearer 'front doors' for business engagement, and researchers and entrepreneurs need to invest in understanding each other's capabilities. Bridging this divide can accelerate innovation and commercialization.

Trust is a foundation of lasting collaboration

International research, innovation, and commercialization partnerships are built over time through institution-to-institution, researcher-to-researcher, and ecosystem-to-ecosystem ties. NTU's investment in large-scale 'corporate labs' that connect university and private sector research illustrates how trust can scale into major innovation platforms.

Leverage Canada-Asia complementarities in food, energy, and sustainability

Canada's abundance of resources, agricultural strength, and clean-tech expertise align directly with Asian priorities such as food security, energy transition, and sustainable infrastructure. Canada-Asia partnerships that combine research, innovation and entrepreneurship can be important components for unlocking the next stage of value-added solutions.

For Canada, Asia should be a core growth market, not a side opportunity

For too long, Canadian businesses have focused overwhelmingly on the U.S. market. Asia's scale, rising demand, and openness to trusted partners make it essential to Canada's diversification strategy. The opportunity is significant, and the universities and companies that are prepared to show up, build relationships, and invest in international excellence will benefit the most.

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Where Canada and Asia Meet:

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LUNCH PLENARY:

Building Canada-Asia Collaboration Networks

SPEAKERS

Opening Remarks



Gabriel Miller

President & CEO, Universities Canada, Canada-based

Moderator



Brad Sutherland

Director, Business Development, Air Canada, Canada-based



Bill Flanagan

President & Vice Chancellor, University of Alberta, Canada-based



Louis Phee

Vice President (Innovation & Entrepreneurship), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore-based



Arlene Dickinson

Managing General Partner, District Ventures Capital, Canada-based

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Building Canada-Asia Collaboration Networks" plenary session made a compelling case that connecting university research and commercial ecosystems will be central to catalyzing the next era of growth to power Canada-Asia relationships. Connecting Canadian research strengths, entrepreneurial talent, and trade ambitions with research-based innovation ecosystems and dynamic markets in Asia will be important to drive economic opportunity as global supply chains shift in response to traditional partnerships becoming less predictable.

Universities are engines of commercialization, not just centres of scholarship. Discussion coalesced around more effectively unlocking valuable market-relevant knowledge in universities in collaboration with entrepreneurs to drive economic growth, with a particular focus on connecting researchers and entrepreneurs in Canada and Asia to leverage trans-Pacific complementarities. Among sectors and opportunities cited by panellists were Canada's strengths in food, energy, and energy transition. In this context, Bill Flanagan, President & Vice Chancellor of the University of Alberta, and Louis Phee, Vice President (Innovation & Entrepreneurship) at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), discussed the new partnership between the two universities focused on aspects of the energy transition.

A critical observation for Canadians: effectively catalyzing Canada-Asia research and entrepreneurial co-operation through institutions of higher

learning and commercial and innovation ecosystems requires the Canadian side to move quickly and think beyond the United States. Singapore's strategy of making large-scale investments in university-private sector research labs could also be instructive.

“I think that entrepreneurs do not necessarily understand the way universities operate and think. And I would say the same is true for universities not understanding the way entrepreneurs think and operate. Figuring out a way to bridge that gap will be very helpful to making something impactful happen in the marketplace and the globe.”

– Arlene Dickinson, Managing General Partner, District Ventures Capital

Effective Canada-Asia collaboration networks are built in the research/entrepreneur space when universities, governments, capital, and innovation ecosystems move in co-ordination. Canada has much to offer to partners in Asia; capturing the opportunity requires urgency, clear pathways to partnership, and continued connection.

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Trade crisis is accelerating Canada–ASEAN co-operation

Geoeconomic disruption is acting as a catalyst, pushing Canada and ASEAN to prioritize expanded ties on a fast track. This is a welcome move. The lesson: strategic progress often happens when external shocks force overdue decisions.

ASEAN enters uncertainty from a position of strength

Despite global volatility, in 2025, ASEAN delivered outsized economic growth, expanding trade and attracting significant investment. Panellists credited long-term regional integration, adaptive policymaking, and open markets. For Canadian stakeholders, this reinforces the idea that ASEAN is a ‘growth story’ to join rather than observe.

Energy grids, critical minerals are first-order opportunities for Canada–ASEAN co-operation

Concrete examples include best-of-class technology for the trillion-dollar ASEAN Power Grid, an invitation for Canadian companies to manufacture subsea cables in Southeast Asia, and collaboration on critical minerals. These are investable sectors where Canadian expertise can meet regional demand now.

Strategic autonomy requires more partners, not fewer

ASEAN’s approach remains to engage widely rather than choose between major powers. China is ASEAN’s number one trading partner, while the U.S. remains the region’s foremost investor. Canada fits naturally as a trusted middle power with complementary strengths. Diversified partnerships can help both Canada and ASEAN strengthen resilience.

Geopolitical situation still unpredictable

Last year was a tumultuous period — one panellist described it as the “year of living dangerously” — in which ASEAN fared relatively well, despite significant headwinds. And for ASEAN, several dangers remain, whether latent or proximate, including China’s not-so-secret military expansion and the potential for trading partners exhibiting renewed interest in the region — such as Canada — to return to U.S.-centric economic activity.

FEBRUARY 10-11, 2026 | SINGAPORE

Where Canada and Asia Meet:

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CLOSING PLENARY:

Charting Strategic Directions in Turbulent Geopolitical Times

SPEAKERS

Moderator



Vina Nadjibulla

Vice-President, Research and Strategy, Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, Canada-based



H.E. Satvinder Singh

Deputy Secretary General for ASEAN Economic Community, ASEAN Secretariat, Indonesia-based



Karishma Vaswani

Opinion Columnist, Bloomberg, Singapore-based



Djatmiko B. Witjaksana

Director General, International Trade Negotiations, Ministry of Trade, Government of Indonesia, Indonesia-based

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In exploring ASEAN’s weathering of tariffs and trade uncertainty in 2025, CIAC2026’s closing plenary captured a defining paradox of the current global moment: intensifying geopolitical friction has created fresh urgency for catalyzing economic resilience through strategic collaboration. Panellists identified that ASEAN is navigating what Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney described as a “rupture, not a transition” as an agile, co-operative economic bloc committed to diversifying partnerships both internally and externally to build resilience.

Panellists presented ASEAN as encountering this turbulence from a position of confidence. Despite U.S. tariffs, trade tensions, and slowing global investment, ASEAN recorded stronger-than-expected economic growth, robust trade expansion, and rising foreign direct investment in 2025. That performance was framed as a result of decades of institution-building and economic integration through which ASEAN has become China’s largest trading partner.

Negotiations on the ASEAN–Canada Free Trade Agreement are advancing rapidly, supported by strong political will and growing business interest on both sides, and are expected to conclude this year. Panellists highlighted practical Canada–ASEAN opportunities in clean energy and critical minerals, with a particular focus on encouraging Canadian contributions to a revitalized ASEAN Power Grid.

At the same time, the discussion avoided naïve optimism. Questions remain about unpredictable U.S. policy shifts, China’s expanding economic and military influence, and whether today’s momentum will endure if global conditions stabilize. Yet the panel’s central conclusion was unmistakable: Canada and ASEAN should not wait for certainty. In uncertain times, strategic partnerships are built by those willing to move first.

“

I have not seen co-ordination, consolidation, and support from the private sector, groups of businesses, coming together in such concerted numbers in our region like what I’ve seen coming from Canada... We really appreciate the engagement, the love that you guys are giving to us in ASEAN. We really welcome that.”

– His Excellency Satvinder Singh,
Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Economic Community

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