



## Canadian Minister, Stockwell Day commemorates CanCham 20th Anniversary as he marks 60th anniversary of Canada-Philippines relations

**T**HE HONOURABLE Stockwell Day, Canada's Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, marked the 60th anniversary of Canada's diplomatic relations with the Philippines with a one-day visit to the Southeast Asian country, where he promoted Canadian commercial partnerships and paid tribute to Philippine rebuilding efforts after recent floods.

"The hearts of Canadians go out to the people of the Philippines in these difficult times," said Minister Day after touring some of the areas devastated by Tropical Storm Ketsana (known in the Philippines as Ondoy) and Typhoon Parma (Pepeng). "I was inspired by the spirit of those who are rebuilding their country in the face of such tragic loss. Canada is proud to support their efforts and is contributing up to \$5 million in humanitarian aid for relief supplies, such as water and sanitation, food and non-food items, and shelter materials."

In addition, Minister Day undertook a number of events to promote economic ties between the two countries.

"There are natural links between Canada and the Philippines," said Minister Day. "I came here to strengthen our economic partnerships with the Philippines in key sectors and to showcase Canada's cutting-edge technology and services. There are many opportunities for our businesses in areas such as agri-food, transportation, infrastructure, innovation and the extractive sector."

Minister Day also commemorated the 20th anniversary of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines with the unveiling of a plaque at a speech before an audience of corporate leaders and key government officials. During the speech, the Minister announced that Canada is providing \$18 million in development assistance to help create better conditions for economic growth and job creation in the Philippines.

"Canadian expertise in local business development can play a big role here in the Philippines," said Minister Day.

While in Manila, the Minister also launched Canadian Food Week in the Philippines. This initiative showcases high-quality Canadian food products recently introduced to the Philippines market, such as salmon, king crab and scallops, as well as long-standing imports such as beef and pork. Canada enjoys a strong reputation in the Philippines for safe and high-quality agri-food products.

Minister Day also planted a tree at Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada's premises in Manila to celebrate the company's success in the Philippines and its strong commitment to corporate social responsibility and the environment. Sun Life's new headquarters in the Philippines meets Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design requirements.

In 2008, Canadian merchandise exports to the Philippines showed strong growth, increasing 21.9 percent over 2007 levels to reach \$559 million. Canadian imports from the Philippines were valued at \$823 million in 2008. Canadian direct investments in the Philippines in 2008 were valued at \$671 million, while Philippine investments in Canada were valued at \$2 million.

More details about Minister Day's visit to the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore, and on his participation at the APEC meeting may be found at Ministerial visit to Southeast Asia.

*On stage, Minister Stockwell Day (left) and CanCham president, Julian Payne (right), unveil a plaque commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines at a speech before an audience of corporate leaders and key government officials. Also included in the picture are (from left), former Philippine Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, former DTI Secretary, Jose Pardo, SunLife's President and CEO, Rizalina Mantaring and Canadian Ambassador to the Philippines, Robert Desjardins.*

