

He proposed a new security dialogue among North Pacific countries (United States, the Soviet Union, the two Koreas, Japan, China and Canada) on regional security issues. He suggested a "Pacific adaptation" of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, which could explore "confidence and security-building measures".

The challenge of Asia-Pacific trade

Mr. Clark said that greater consultation was needed on trade issues as well: the policies of some Asia-Pacific countries which take advantage of access to major markets without lowering trade barriers to their own markets; the massive trade imbalance between Japan and the United States; and the potential development of North American, European and Asia-Pacific trading blocks. Though pleased that the United States and Japan recently negotiated a trade agreement, he said that bilateral approaches can pose risks for countries not at the table.

"Their initiative should solve trade problems not transfer them, and we are confident both these nations understand our concerns," he said.

Mr. Clark said that a successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations was the key to managing international trade issues.

"The most solid basis for a lasting solution to trans-Pacific trade problems is an open, stable and free trading environment, a trading environment regulated by clear rules, fairly applied and comprehensively observed," stated the Minister.

He also proposed strengthening the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation conference (APEC) as a further means of addressing Asia-Pacific trade issues.

"It was created - and should grow - because it offers a new opportunity - which has not existed before - to manage the challenges created by the region's economic dynamism and to anticipate threats to regional prosperity before they become crises," stated Mr. Clark. "The Pacific Region needs a forum where trade and economic problems between the countries of the region and their Pacific Rim partners in North America can be addressed."

The Asia-Pacific voice in the world

The Minister said that closer co-operation was also needed so that Asia-Pacific countries could contribute their resources and talents effectively to global peace and prosperity, especially in Europe.

"European peace and prosperity will still be partial if we are not able to benefit from bringing Asia into the new Europe now being built," said Mr. Clark. "We have before us the opportunity to create not simply a new Europe, but a region of security and prosperity which circles the globe."