

- Indigenous peoples in Canada and in Asia must be at the table in policy discussions to speak on their own behalf (the circumpolar Arctic Council offers a model of a forum for international indigenous discourse that ought to be kept in mind in the context of the Asia/Pacific);
- Exchanges and linkages between Canada and the region, including especially at the people-to-people level, need to be increased;
- To enhance its influence and leverage, Canada needs to strengthen its "on-the-ground" representation in the region (at the governmental, non-governmental, and commercial levels);
- The 50th anniversary of the Human Rights Charter offers an important occasion to promote human rights in the region;
- Multilateralism will continue to be the preferred vehicle for Canadian diplomatic intervention in the region, but it cannot be assumed that the European experience will provide the model.

Participants expressed the concern that while there is a formal commitment to promoting human rights in the context of efforts to expand trade and economic opportunity, there is a perceived imbalance in the level of funds respectively committed to human rights and trade promotion. Funding for overseas development assistance and for development education have been severely cut, undermining CIDA's capacity to support good governance initiatives and to strengthen civil society, both key elements in human rights work.

This concern reflected a broader view that while current foreign policy is committed to promoting "Canadian values" — including basic values such as human rights, democracy, press freedom, environmental protection and the peaceful settlement of disputes — funding cuts have disproportionately affected the very international programs and institutions that can help carry such values into the international community. Cutbacks in Canadian funding support for the UNHCR and the Human Rights Commission, for example, while trade promotion appears to be given priority political attention, challenge the current rhetorical commitment to peacebuilding and a values-based foreign policy.

One of the implications of diminished concrete commitment to "values" issues is that attention to such concerns is downloaded to the NGO community. Increasingly, NGOs are asked to not only give leadership but to assume primary programmatic responsibility for promoting Canadian concerns related to values