

We are convinced, however, that we must take advantage of the current comparative stability in the region to build the structures that will either head off conflict in the future or help us to deal with whatever tensions do arise.

Since being appointed Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) I have travelled to virtually every country in the region; I have travelled to every ASEAN [Association of Southeast Asian Nations] country, and from China to New Zealand, and Korea to Pakistan. In total I have visited close to 25 countries in my portfolio. From my repeated visits it is quite evident that Canada's role in the Asia-Pacific is often not well understood. But, as I hope to show you, our past, our present and our future are bound up in the region.

Canada made significant sacrifices in places such as Hong Kong in World War II. At the other extremity of Asia, we have been involved in attempts to keep the peace in Kashmir since 1948, and we continue to offer our support in any effort to find solutions to the current conflict in Sri Lanka.

In the Korean War, Canadians formed one of the largest UN contingents and suffered many casualties. We served in the Indochinese and Vietnamese control commissions. And we participated in UN actions in Afghanistan and Cambodia. We are still active in demining training in Cambodia.

We were one of the driving forces in the creation of the ASEAN Regional Forum, the only region-wide security forum for Asia-Pacific. In the ASEAN Regional Forum context, Canada took the initiative to hold a seminar on peacekeeping in Brunei in March, and will co-chair, with Malaysia, a follow-up seminar in the coming months.

I am also pleased to note that the 19 ministers assembled in Brunei on August 1 for the second ASEAN Regional Forum and Post-Ministerial saw fit to single out for particular attention the Canadian contribution to the South China Sea workshops hosted by Indonesia.

In addition to formal governmental processes like the ASEAN Regional Forum and Post Ministerial, there has also been constant and very encouraging activity at a more informal level among non-governmental players such as academics, and officials acting in their personal capacities. This dialogue has paralleled and, at times, propelled the formal intergovernmental process. Canadians have played an active role in offering both intellectual and organizational leadership to this process.

As they have grown and proven their value, these activities have become more focussed, and there is now a region-wide, non-governmental umbrella organization that tries to pull together