

encouragement, have governments in Southeast Asia (in ASEAN) and East Asia diffidently tested multilateral arrangements—or as it is more fashionable to say, plurilateralism. Should the Canadian government try to maximize its influence by multilateralizing the international politics of human rights? Or instead, despite the disadvantages of size, should Canada engage Asian governments as best it can bilaterally?

2. How can Canada help the region's indigenous peoples find their voice and their place in the countries of Asia-Pacific?

It is almost as if they didn't exist—or as if they lived hidden and silent in the deepest forest, or on the remotest islands. But there are tens of millions of indigenous and tribal people across Asia-Pacific (there is no agreement on their numbers), by and large marginalized both literally and metaphorically: frequently relegated to hinterlands, impoverished, politically weak, solemnly ignored by politicians and diplomats. In some Asian countries their very existence is denied; governments define them as ethnic minorities, or as nothing at all. Even where indigenous peoples are recognized as forming sovereign, independent states—the micro-states of the Pacific islands—they are ignored for the most part in the international politics of trans-Pacific and Asian relations.

Advocates for indigenous peoples argue that they are not just another category of minorities. (In some areas they are majorities, albeit usually disadvantaged.) For one thing, indigenous peoples have been afflicted with a perniciously characteristic combination of injustices and hardships: forced population transfers into or out of homelands; seizures and destruction of lands and resources; subjection to alien education