

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to talk with you today to outline my role as Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) and to discuss some of the ways in which we can work together to further our relationship with countries of the Asia-Pacific region.

First of all, my role as Secretary of State (Asia-Pacific) is to advise the Minister of Foreign Affairs on Asia-Pacific matters. I also work very closely with our Minister for International Trade, helping him with our government's efforts to open up markets in Asia to Canadian business. My responsibilities, therefore, cover both geographic and sectoral issues, such as political and economic matters and social development assistance.

Earlier this year our government released its Statement on Foreign Policy entitled *Canada in the World*. In that statement, we outlined our guiding objectives: first, the promotion of prosperity and employment; second, the protection of security; and third, the promotion of our values and culture. We encounter issues in all three areas in Asia-Pacific and often they are tightly connected to one another. Some tend to see one element as being pursued at the expense of the other, but I see them as being pursued in harmony. Without the basic elements of good governance, rule of law, and human rights, there would be no long-term stability in individual countries or indeed, in the region. Today I would like to focus on the security aspects of our relationship.

The Asia-Pacific region is probably the one that has seen some of the most dramatic changes since World War II. Of course, there have been "headline" events - revolutions, military coups, insurgencies and civil wars - but there have also been very significant peaceful political evolutions such as decolonialization and constitutional reforms. Even more significant, there has been steady economic growth in almost all countries in the region, especially those countries in North Asia and Southeast Asia. Indeed, growth rates in much of the Asia-Pacific region during the 1980s were more than twice those of the rest of the world. Asia's share of the world income could rise from 24 per cent in 1989 to 35 per cent by 2010, and to over 50 per cent by 2040.

Hence, while it would be incorrect to argue that threats to security in Asia-Pacific are more serious now than they were during the Cold War, the scope of Canada's interests in the region is much wider than ever before.

The region is now dynamic but the environment remains uncertain. We cannot predict the outcome of generational changes in some Asia-Pacific countries or delve into the minds of those who will be shaping policy in China. We cannot predict with certainty what will happen in the Koreas, in the China Straits, in the South China Sea, in Kashmir. Indeed, we cannot predict confidently that tensions will not arise where they are currently dormant or non-existent.