

In this respect, China is key. We in Canada and Japan need to make a concerted effort to help influence the way that China adapts to new roles and a new status.

A potential economic superpower, we must encourage change to the political process as well as human rights and democratic development.

And let us not forget Russia. Russia needs to be recognized as both a global and a regional player, despite the existence of specific bilateral difficulties. We cannot build stability anywhere on the globe, nor co-operation in Asia Pacific, without the involvement of Russia.

A strong Asia-Pacific region, working together, harnessing the strengths of all of its members, from Japan to Canada, from the U.S. to Korea, from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to Australia, can play a collective role in building global systems and global stability.

The fourth task or focus is the sharing of prosperity, extending the benefits of economic growth and advancement to all countries in the region, and around the world.

There are many avenues for achieving this objective. The most important are open markets, liberalized trade and development co-operation.

The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) remains essential to the fulfilment of these objectives. Canada remains strongly committed to a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round, and Japan's active involvement in this process is essential.

I want to address specifically the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The NAFTA is consistent with, and a stepping stone toward, global trade liberalization. It is not and will not be a "trading bloc." Some of our transpacific partners have questions about the NAFTA, and Canada for its part is eager to respond to them. But it must be clear that the NAFTA is not a bloc: that contention should be laid to rest once and for all.

Canada and Japan are natural regional and global partners. I would go even further: we have a responsibility to be partners. If we do not act in concert, our interests in the region and in the world will suffer.

- We are both Asia-Pacific countries.
- We are important trading partners for each other.
- We both share the United States as an important trading partner.