

ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA McDOUGALL,
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman and fellow Ministers:

I would like first of all to express Canada's sincere gratitude to the government and people of the Republic of Korea for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting and for the warmth of the hospitality we are being shown. May I particularly thank President Roh for his gracious welcome yesterday.

It is an honour for me to address this distinguished body and a particular pleasure to welcome to the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) family: the People's Republic of China, Hong Kong and Chinese Taipei. The historic significance of their presence is not lost on any of us.

These are changing times. Across the international landscape, old, familiar patterns of conflict are receding, and new challenges are rising to the surface of the international agenda. Challenges such as achieving sustainable development and managing the effects of globalization will increasingly preoccupy policy-makers and international gatherings such as APEC.

Of course, political and economic developments do not occur in a vacuum; what at first glance may appear to be unilateral or bilateral matters often have much wider effect. A co-operative, multilateral approach to solving problems -- whether in areas of traditional security, economic co-operation, demographics or the environment -- reflects this reality and can do much to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits for all.

Canada has been active in seeking new approaches to enhance security and stability. Our approach has focused not only on the regional and global levels but also on sub-regional groupings. Recent examples of our activities in these areas include our efforts within the G-7 and United Nations to address the questions of nuclear and conventional weapons proliferation. In this context, I would like to applaud the recent announcement by President Roh Tae Woo that the Republic of Korea is reaffirming its commitment to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes, a welcome declaration from both a global and a regional perspective.

In this region, we have emphasized the need to determine the feasibility of establishing a North Pacific Co-operative Security Dialogue. Canada is pleased to note that the principles behind this initiative -- an expanded definition of security issues and