

These are three distinct questions, each complicated in its own way. But they are all grounded in a problem as critical to Asia-Pacific societies as to our own—the problem of democracy, of fostering open civil societies whose citizens have the space to make peaceful lives for themselves, along with the freedoms and real opportunity to govern themselves.

Which leads to another theme in this citizens' discussion: the democratization of Canadian foreign policy, and the need for Canadians to make choices between three competing objectives. Those objectives, set out in the Canadian government's 1995 foreign policy statement, are *prosperity*, *security*, and the *projection of Canadian values*—including values of democratic government. But as we will see, in Asia-Pacific it is not always easy to pursue the three objectives simultaneously, in ways that will satisfy every Canadian or every Canadian interest. Throughout the discussion we will ask: What compromises have to be made among Canadian objectives? Can we reconcile colliding interests and values?

Before we begin, we will have to agree on the map to use. The geography of Asia-Pacific is defined as much by history and interest as by latitude and longitude. (For example, APEC's 18 members include Canada, the United States, Mexico and Chile, but exclude Russia despite its Pacific coastline.) If only to focus the discussion, we take Asia-Pacific to mean all the Asian countries on the Pacific from Russia south, all the islands and island states of the Western Pacific, and New Zealand and Australia; we refer as well to Southeast Asia west to Burma, because increasingly these countries locate themselves as Asia-Pacific neighbours.