

Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) as a model for the North Pacific and advocated a similar forum which would establish an administrative base and give states the opportunity to consult on a variety of issues.

Australia was an early advocate of a CSCE-type structure to cover the whole Pacific region and has continued to be active in developing a regional approach. In April 1992, the new Prime Minister of Australia, Paul Keating proposed that regular regional summit meetings of Asia/Pacific countries be initiated. The idea received support from Indonesia and the US. In July 1991, Japan proposed that senior Asian officials meet between the ASEAN annual meeting and the ASEAN Post-Ministerial conference to exchange views.

Former Soviet President Gorbachev advocated similar institutional initiatives and made a number of proposals for arms control and confidence-building measures in the Pacific. In September 1988, Gorbachev proposed that nuclear and naval arms in the Pacific region be frozen at current levels and that measures be aimed at reducing the possibility of confrontation in the Sea of Japan. The US has not given its support to any proposals for new institutions in the North Pacific. It has been reluctant to respond to such initiatives, as well as arms control initiatives, because it fears such measures will adversely affect its military presence in the Pacific, and potentially disrupt other delicate relationships (such as those with Japan, South Korea, and Russia) without necessarily enhancing security to a major degree.

Canada, as a Pacific nation, has also played an active role in efforts to develop institutions and greater cooperation among North Pacific states. As Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark was particularly active in advocating and initiating discussions on this question. In July 1990, during a trip to Victoria, Tokyo and Jakarta, Mr. Clark proposed that a dialogue on security cooperation be initiated among states bordering the North Pacific -- Canada, China, Japan, North and South Korea, the Soviet Union and the US. In putting forward the proposal Mr. Clark called on North Pacific states to seize the opportunity presented by the thaw in East-West relations to develop cooperative mechanisms and diminish the likelihood of regional disputes.

CURRENT CANADIAN POSITION

Canada is very much affected by its position in the North Pacific. A large percentage of immigrants to Canada come from North Pacific nations. Canadians fought in the Korean war and played an important role in the control commissions established for Indo-China. In addition, Canada maintains strong economic ties with a number of North Pacific nations.